THE FOUNDING OF MARATHA FREEDOM

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PREFACE

MAHARASHTRA today occupies a premier position in the heart of free India. In history, too, Maharashtra played a unique role both politically and culturally. But, while the great achievements of Chhatrapati Shivaji and some of the Peshwas, are fairly familiar to people outside Maharashtra, the national contributions of the Marathas have not been appreciated as a whole. It is the purpose of this volume to draw the attention of readers in English to the important contributions of the Marathas in the building up of New India as a sturdy champion of freedom everywhere.

The term 'Maratha', however, is not to be understood here in an ethnic or communal sense. Its full significance will become clear from the role of these people in our national history. Briefly, it is to be understood as implying the Makers of Maharashtra—to whom this book is dedicated.

This volume brings together the substance of my earlier studies, particularly *Maratha History Re-examined* and *The Making of Modern India*. In doing so, all through, the materials have been re-presented as accumulated in the new perspectives. In the main, the 'Notes' given at the end of my earlier book on Maratha history have been repeated here only in part. This should make no difference in the authentification of facts in the light of the specific references given in the earlier volumes.

I have also made use of two works published since: *New History of the Marathas* by G. S. Sardesai, and *Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj* (Marathi) by D. V. Kale. They have been cited in relevant places.

I have written in the belief that History needs re-presentation from time to time, not so much because new facts come into view but more because it throws fresh light upon our changing perspectives. From this point of view, I feel, the value of this humble study calls for no special mention.

Political and cultural freedom, for which the Marathas fought and died in the past, still constitutes the life-breath of Maharashtra as an integral part of independent India.

S. R. S.

NOTE

'MARATHA' and 'Maharashtra' are interrelated words. Maharashtra literally means 'great country'. It is historically traced to the epics and ancient epigraphs wherein *Maha-rattas* or *Maharathikas* are named. In current usage, a Maratha is one who speaks Marathi as his mother tongue. Inside Maharashtra, however, a distinction is made between the Maratha caste and other castes such as Brahman, Prabhu, etc. Among the Marathas, in this sense, there are sub-divisions like Kunbi, Ramoshi, Koli, etc. Political achievement raised some of these Marathas to high rank and even royal status: e.g. Holkar (ruler of Indore) was originally a *Dhanagar* or shepherd. The Peshwas were Brahmans.

The Maratha power was consequently the work of the total efforts of all classes of people living in the territory called Maharashtra and speaking the Marathi language, and not only of the Marathas in the narrower caste-sense of the term. (The introduction to Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, by S. M. Edward,—O.U.P. 1921—deals with these social aspects, though the conclusions drawn there may not be taken as absolutely correct or final.)

From *The Making of Modern India.*

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Rajeshkumar Gambhava

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CHAPTER I

NEW PERSPECTIVES

IF HISTORICAL studies have any value and purpose it is to reveal the past with a view to instructing the present. This depends upon the discovery of the truth about the bygone times and its significance to the living generation. It is hardly to be expected that any writer, however much he might protest to the contrary, will be altogether free from preferences or prejudices. These inherent traits of the human mind are further coloured by the nature of the sources depended upon. In the case of the Marathas, without necessarily being credulous about the native versions as absolutely correct, one has got to be very guarded in accepting the foreign evidence as more reliable or critical merely because it is contrary. Difficult as the task of the historian is, he has, in the last resort, to depend upon his own judgment and discretion. I claim to have done no better in full consciousness of the above considerations. I have consequently been less categorical or dogmatic in the presentation of my conclusions. I am aware that, in the final analysis, they must stand the dual tests of logic and authentic evidence.

Facts are the bricks of which the edifice of History is built. But the architecture is the work of the historian. This accounts for the difference in the presentation of the substance of history by different writers. In the reconstruction and reinterpretation of periods and movements in history the attitude and approach of the historian are not a negligible factor. To Grant Duff the rise of the Maratha power appeared to be as fortuitous as a forest fire in the Sahyadri mountains. Sir Jadunath Sarkar found in it no more than the manifestation of the genius of supermen: "The cohesion of the peoples in the Maratha State," he thought, "was not organic but artificial, accidental, and therefore precarious. It was solely dependent on the ruler's extraordinary personality and disappeared when the country ceased to produce supermen." (*Shivaji*, pp. 485-86). But to Ranade belongs the credit of

having pointed out the larger and deeper significance of Maratha history which he traced to its very roots. This is not to deny that there were accidental as well as personal elements in the shaping of the destiny of the Maratha people. While these exist in all histories, it cannot also be gainsaid that there have been movements like the Renaissance in Europe which may not be explained purely in terms of accidents and personalities. The Maratha *resorgimento* was one such complex historical phenomenon which, because of its uniqueness in Indian history, has not been correctly understood. There have been religious movements in India, like Buddhism, as well as creations of political states, like the Maurya empire; but the combination of the two in the rise of the Maratha nationality was more integral and powerful than any that transpired before. Yet it was not a political movement intended for the propagation of Hindu religion; rather was it an upsurge of a virile people in defence of their own way of living: the Maratha called it *Svarajya* and *Maharashtra Dharma*. Its best and greatest exponents were Shivaji and Ramdas. Whatever the degree of their mutual acquaintance or intimacy, they were together the true protagonists of all that the Maratha movement stood for; the secular and the spiritual aspects respectively.

It is absurd to characterise the Maratha adventure as an attempt to establish a communal empire. Once the safety and integrity of *Maharashtra Dharma* was secured, it ceased to be merely or even mainly religious. It tended to become more and more political, but the original impulse indubitably came from religion. The equality of opportunity afforded to men of merit drawn from all castes and grades of society, including the Muslims, demonstrated the broad basis on which the Maratha State in its prestine form was founded. Its later deterioration ought not to prejudice our judgment about its original character, which alone concerns us here.

A recent writer has attempted to make out a case for the economic interpretation of Maratha history.* He has tried to show that Shivaji was the leader of the down-trodden peasants of Maharashtra against the dominating landlord class. In

* Lalji Pendse : धर्म की क्रांति.

this 'class-war' it was a matter of historical accident that the majority of the exploited class happened to be Hindus. There were Hindu *Deshmukhs* and *watandars* who were as much opposed to Shivaji as the Muslim rulers themselves. It was a war of the exploited against the exploiters. However, even he does not deny that there were other factors also at work in the *milieu* : he only wants to emphasise that the economic incentive was an equally potent force which served to drive the masses into effective action. While there is room for special interpretations, the nearest approximation to historical truth must necessarily be the total view based upon such sociological data as might be available.

Finally, whatsoever the forces at work—and they were various; and whosoever the personalities—and they were numerous—participating in the historical process; the total achievement—the building up of a rich, dynamic and creative new order out of an inert, supine and chaotic mass of scattered ignorant peoples—a metamorphosis, the like of which had never been witnessed in India before, certainly merits the the closest, dispassionate and respectful study at the hands of historians. Nothing more and nothing less is attempted here.

"The Mahrattas were once a mighty nation," wrote Edward Scott Waring in 1810; "how they rose and how they fell may surely challenge enquiry." Nearly twenty years before Waring's *History of the Marathas* appeared, the subject had attracted the attention of a German professor of Halle University who published his now little known *Geschichte der Maratten*, as early as 1791, for the edification of his European contemporaries. The writer himself admitted that he could not vouch for the authenticity of the earlier parts of his fantastic work, but that he had compiled it from such accounts as were available to him in the several European languages. It comprised 288 octavo pages and also contained a map prepared by Forster in 1786. The book closed with 'the peace with England of 17th May, 1782.' The author never visited India, and the work has little value to-day except as a rare specimen of the first European account of the Marathas, full of quaint errors.

The next in point of interest is the better known work of Edward Scott Waring, published in London in 1810. The author was for seven years attached to the English embassy at Poona and had greater opportunities of gaining information upon more points than usually fall to the lot of other persons. "I state this," he records in his Preface, "to excuse the presumption of my undertaking, aware that I expose myself to the charge of having trifled with my time, and of having lost opportunities not to be recovered." Modestly conscious of his limitations, "yet, without arrogance," he adds, "I may assume the merit of having been the first to present the reader with a connected history of the Mahrattas, derived from original sources, and sources till lately not known to have existed. I am aware that some portions of Mahratta history are before the public; none, however, derived from their own annals, and consequently neither so copious nor so authentic." He particularly assumes merit 'of having considered his subject most fully, and of having spared no pains to procure every possible record that could add greater interest to his work, or justify the favourable opinion of his friends'. His appraisal of the comparative merits and demerits of the Persian and Marathi source materials is worthy of special attention.

Regarding the former, he writes, "None, so far as I can judge, can be more fallacious, or can less requite the diligence of patient investigation. Ferishta, who composed a general history of India, as well as a particular history of the Deccan, is almost the only historian who merits the praise of impartiality and accuracy. He died before the era of Mahratta independence, and his mantle has not fallen upon any of his brethren. The Mooslims, of course, view with animosity and anguish, the progress the Mahrattas have made in the conquest of their fairest provinces, and which of late years must have been aggravated by the bondage of their king, the unfortunate representative of the house of Timoor. From such persons little that was favourable to the Mahratta character could be expected. The facts they give are garbled and perverted, while the slightest circumstance against them is seized upon and extended to an im-

measurable length. Their style is also a subject of just reprehension. Their forced and unnatural images, their swelling cadences and modulated phraseology, are as disgusting to a discriminating taste, as they must be inimical to historical truth. For in a history composed in verse, something will be sacrificed to measure, and much to rhythm. Although the Persian histories be not written in verse, yet they partake of all its faults. They abound in quaint similes and forced antithesis, while the redundancy of their epithets distract and bewilder attention. If this judgment to the Persian scholar seem harsh, I refer him to the history of the late Nizam of the Deccan, or, if he object, to the undisputed master of this prurient style, the celebrated Abul Fazil."

One may not quite fall in with this criticism in toto, but it is certainly a welcome corrective to the exaggerated importance that is attached by some latter-day scholars to the sanctity of the Persian authorities. Apart from the linguistic features, the Muslim accounts may not be considered more reliable or authentic simply because they contradict the native sources. There is much truth in Waring's warning that from such persons little that was favourable to the Maratha character could be expected: 'The facts they give are garbled and perverted while the slightest circumstance against them is seized upon, and extended to an immeasurable length'.

On the contrary, "Not so the Mahratta histories," states Waring. "Their historians (some will deny them the name) write in a plain, simple and unaffected style, content to relate passing events in apposite terms, without seeking turgid imagery or inflated phraseology. Excepting in the letter addressed to the Peshwa, by the great Mulhar Rao Holkar, no attempt is made to make the worse appear the better reason. Victory and defeat are briefly related; if they pass over the latter too hastily, they do not dwell upon the former with unnecessary minuteness. They do not endeavour to bias or mislead the judgment, but are certainly deficient in chronology and in historical reflections. Whether I have done justice to their works I am at a loss to determine, aware of my own incompetency, and not ignorant

of the deficiency of my materials." The frankness and modesty of Waring are worthy of emulation, though we may not accept all his conclusions.

The premier historian of the Marathas in English, though not on that account unchallengeable, was James Cunningham Grant Duff. He was captain of the Native Infantry of Bombay and Political Agent at Satara (1806-22). The first edition of his well-known *History of the Mahrattas* was published in London in 1826 (in 3 vols.). In its latest form (1921) it has been resurrected in two volumes edited by S. M. Edwardes with an interesting 'Memoir of the Author' and a learned Introduction.

"The want of a complete history of the rise, progress, and decline of our immediate predecessors in conquest, the Mahrattas," writes Grant Duff, "has been long felt by all persons conversant with the affairs of India; in so much, that it is very generally acknowledged, we cannot fully understand the means by which our own vast empire in that quarter was acquired, until this desideratum be supplied."

Aware of the difficulties and shortcomings of the indefatigable Orme and the pioneer Scott Waring, Grant Duff honestly strove (working twelve and fourteen hours daily without intermission.....subject to very serious headaches, which at last became very agonising, returning every fifth day, and lasting from six to sixteen hours at a time, requiring me to work with wet cloths girt about my head) to make good their deficiencies, with what result modern scholars best know.

"Circumstances placed me," he says in his Preface to the first volume of the original edition, "in situations which at once removed many of the obstacles which those gentlemen (Orme and Waring) encountered, and threw materials within my reach which had been previously inaccessible." Nevertheless, he confesses his initial lack of education and heavy preoccupations with civil and military duties, "ill-calculated for preparing us for the task of historians". But it must be admitted that Grant Duff, by his indefatigable labours provided for all his successors a solid bedrock and starting point in the writing of a history of the Maratha people.

He has no doubt provoked much criticism—not undeservedly—; but his very shortcomings and errors provided hot incentives to further efforts by the natives in re-writing their own history more correctly. To be fair to Grant Duff, his critics would do well to remember his frank attitude expressed in unmistakable words: "There being differences of opinion as to whether the writer of history should draw his own conclusions, or leave the reader reflect for himself, I may expect censure or approbation according to the taste of parties. I have never spared my sentiments when it became my duty to offer them; but I have certainly rather endeavoured to supply facts than to obtrude my own commentaries; and though I am well aware that, to gain confidence with the one half of the world, one has only to assume it, I trust that I shall not have the less credit with the other for frankly acknowledging a distrust in myself."

Besides, he also stated: "in such a work many errors must exist; of these, I can only say, I shall feel obliged to any person who, after due consideration and inquiry, will have the goodness, publicly or privately, to point them out". No one can deny that this has been too well done by readers of Grant Duff for over a century since. "Your difficulty, and yet what none but you could accomplish," wrote Montstuart Elphinstone to him, "was to get at facts and to combine them with judgment so as to make a consistent and rational history out of a mass of gosssiping *Bukkurs* and gasconading *Tawareekhs*." He also suggested: "I think however, you should have introduced more of the manners of the Mahrattas as they now stand, and it may be a question whether that does not come more naturally when you reach the present period; but, on the whole I think that, as you are writing for Europe, you should make people acquainted with your actors before you begin your play." Grant Duff appears to have acted on this hint somewhat in his 'Preliminary observations respecting the Geography, Chief Features, Climate, People, Religion, Learning, Early History. and Institutions of the Maharatta Country'; and these have been supplemented and improved upon by his latest editor in his Introduction. Whether or not Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas* 'takes its place in the very first rank of

historical compositions', it has been considered important enough to be translated into Marathi, quoted and criticised during a whole century. Though some of his details and conclusions have been criticised and corrected, the work as a whole is yet to be superseded effectively, despite the researches and writings of generations of scholars.

Mahadev Govind Ranade's *Rise of the Maratha Power*, first published in 1900,* not only marked the next milestone in Maratha historiography, but also emphasised a new approach and outlook regarding the subject. It clearly indicated that no foreigner, however deligent or honest, could correctly gauge or interpret the true character or significance of historical movements. Grant Duff had no doubt sensed the importance of 'a very extraordinary power, the history of which was only known in a very superficial manner,' but he could not adequately understand or assess its spirit as Ranade could. From this point of view, even Indian scholars of great reputation hailing from other parts of India and drawing their inspirations from tainted sources sadly missed the real import and correct significance of the rise of the Maratha power. There cannot indeed be any true insight without sympathy. Ranade may not have been right in all his conclusions, but his main contribution consisted in emphasising a fresh approach and view-point. The rise of the Maratha power, he pointed out, 'was not a mere accident due to any chance combination, but a genuine effort on the part of a Hindu nationality to assert its independence;' and that 'the success it achieved was due to a general upheaval, social, religious, and political of all classes of the population'. There are many, he writes, 'who think that there can be no particular moral significance in the story of the rise and fall of a freebooting power, which thrived by plunder and adventure, and succeeded only because it was the most cunning and adventurous among all those who helped to dismember the great Moghul Empire after the death of Aurangzeb. This is a very common feeling with the readers, who derived their knowledge of these events solely from the works of English historians. Even Mr. Grant Duff held the

* This classic has now been re-published by the University of Bombay (1960) with valuable editorial matter added.

view that "the turbulent predatory spirit of the Hindus of Maharashtra, though smothered for a time, had its latent embers stirred by the contentions of their Mahomedan Conquerors, till, like the parched grass kindled amid the forest of the Sahyadri mountains, they burst forth in spreading flame, and men afar off wondered at the conflagration". If this view of the historian be correct, it may fairly be urged that there is nothing in the narrative which can be described as having a moral significance useful for all time. The sequel of this narrative will, however, it is hoped, furnish grounds which will lead the historical student of Modern India to the conclusion that such a view is inconsistent: with facts, and that the mistake is of a sort which renders the whole story unintelligible. Without repeating all his arguments, I feel no hesitation in expressing my complete agreement with Ranade's main contention that, "Freebooters and adventurers never succeed in building up empires which last for generations and permanently alter the political map of a great Continent." One cannot help regretting that Ranade's contemplated "second volume" (of which manuscript notes were nearly ready) should have for ever remained unpublished. Nevertheless, his *General Introduction to Shahu Chhatrapati and the Peshwa's Diaries* is a very valuable sequel indicating the sound principles of his treatment.

A History of the Maratha People by C. A. Kincaid and D. B. Parasnis, first published in three volumes (1918, 1922 and 1925), has since been brought out in a single volume (1931). The work, despite the linking together of the two names, bears unmistakable testimony to Mr. Kincaid's individual authorship, though Parasnis must have supplied him the materials. This is the meaning of the acknowledgement. "For twelve years we had been closely associated in the creation of this work". Mr. Kincaid, it must be frankly stated, is a story-writer—not a historian. His second chapter on 'The Pandharpur Movement, 1271-1640', is typical of his method; he hardly misses an opportunity to intersperse his narrative with childish anecdotes which needlessly undermine the standard of the book as a serious study of Maratha History. Dennis Kincaid's *The Grand Rebel*, which is admittedly 'An

Impression of Shivaji, Founder of the Maratha Empire' (1937) is, within its scope and purpose, a much better representation in fascinating style of his important theme. His brilliant sketch of Shivaji—"The founder of the Maratha state whose memory inspired the rise of modern Hindu Nationalism, a man for whom a majority of Hindus entertain much the same sentiment as the Germans for Frederick the Second and the Italians for Garibaldi, and whom the Marathas adore as more than human"—is at once more artistic in its sense of proportion as well as sense of history. His picture of the Marathas presented in his 'Prologue', conveys a truer and more sympathetic impression of the people than is contained in more learned treatises lacking the poetic insight of Dennis Kincaid. As he has neatly put it in his 'Preface': "Most English people have beard of the Moguls as almost the traditional pre-British rulers of India. They then find it puzzling that the earlier heroes of Anglo-Indian biography apparently never oppose any Moguls but are constantly in difficulties with the Marathas.... Such of their chiefs who were so unfortunate as to oppose Anglo-Indian celebrities are generally reprobated as rebels; their names, which Victorian writers made earnest but incorrect attempts to spell, provide an easy target for such sprightly historians of to-day as Mr. Guedella, who are entertained by the un-English sound of them. But as at school one's curiosity was often piqued less by the inevitable Romans than by their unsuccessful opponents, many people must have vaguely wondered about these Marathas; the rise of whose power was exactly contemporaneous with the appearance of the English in India; who destroyed the Mogul Empire and disputed with both English and French for the mastery of a sub-continent; who once more opposed the English in the Mutiny providing in Nana Sahib the cleverest and in the Princess of Jhansi the best and bravest, of the revolutionary leaders; and from whom have sprung rulers of such deserved repute as Princess Ahalyabai of Indore and the present (1937) Gaekwar of Baroda, and dynasties as devoted to the Empire as Gwalior and Kolhapur."

The *Riyasat*, in Marathi by the late Rao Bahadur G. S. Sardesai, stands in a class by itself. It is a mine of informa-

tion and a monument to the patient industry, painstaking scholarship, and patriotic zeal of the venerable historian of Maharashtra who was a living encyclopædia of historical information with a particular flair for dates, documents and details. This is not the place to assess his vast and varied work as an historian; but his appreciation by his life-long collaborator and friend, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, may be quoted without being inapposite: "Eternal vigilance in self-criticism has been the saving salt of his writings. Tireless striving after accuracy, passion for going down to the root of things, cool balance of judgment and unfailing commonsense in interpretation have marked his historical works." In his *Main Currents of Maratha History*, which is a reprint of his lectures delivered at the Patna University in 1926, Sardesai observed :

'A vast amount of fresh historical material has been published in Maharashtra during the last quarter of a century, of which the outside public of India who do not know the Marathi language, are more or less ignorant. It is impossible to make all this material available to readers in English, and unless it reaches non-Marathi readers, it cannot excite corresponding research in other languages. With this object in view, I thought of taking a rapid glance over the whole course of Maratha history, touching those salient points which have been recently established in Maharashtra on this new evidence, and those others which are still to some extent debatable, indefinite, or vague. I shall therefore speak on the aims and objects of Maratha policy, explaining what it has achieved and what it has failed to achieve, what good or evil it did to India, and what place it can claim in the history of India as a whole, interpreting, in fact to the non-Maratha world, the meaning of this documentary evidence, and the results it leads one to, as regards the past achievements of the Marathas. At the same time, I have a great desire to bring about a co-ordination of effort throughout the country between Maharashtra and the other parts of India in this important subject of national interest .....I think without such an interchange and such a supplementing from all quarters, our individual efforts in Maharashtra will for ever remain isolated and incomplete. Our

past is a common property which we all have to share equally.'

This puts in a nutshell the *raison d'etre* of the present effort also. It attempts to do more elaborately and systematically what Ranade and Sardesai outlined from the point of view of the natives of Maharashtra. Much research has been carried on ceaselessly, in and outside Maharashtra, bringing to light new facts as well as fresh standpoints. The work of synthesising and interpretation has not merely not kept pace with this march of research, but has altogether lagged behind. Very learned treatises, such as Sarkar's *Shivaji and His Times* and Surendranath Sen's *Administrative System of the Marathas* and *Military System of the Marathas* have been published, but few attempts have been made to study objectively Maratha history as a whole, in the light of all the new materials and literature. Without presuming to judge Sardesai's voluminous work in this behalf, I shall content myself here with quoting his own candid opinion or self-assessment in his Preface to the third volume of his *New History of the Marathas* (1948). "I have called this book a New History," he writes, "but that title need not be taken to claim for it the rank of a definitive standard authority. My aim has been much humbler, to pour out to the sympathetic reader all that an ordinary son of Maharashtra has thought and felt, as he studied and pondered on the storied past of his country during his life of more than four score years. In spite of the long list of my historical works, I do not claim to be a scholar or even a trained historian, but only an eager tireless worker. Call this my final work, if you like, the table-talk of an ardent seeker after knowledge."

The task no doubt appears to be too staggering for any single individual to attempt. The materials are so vast, varied and scattered, the languages in which they are found are so many and difficult, and the controversies over details and situations so frequent and baffling, that these have effectively scared away scholars far better equipped and qualified than I can ever claim to be. But time and tide waits for no man, and with the ceaseless accumulation of materials the task is bound to grow more bewildering as the years roll on.

If I have ventured to meet this need, it is out of no false sense

of the lightness of the task that I have done so. I am fully conscious of the greatness of my subject. Considering the nature and scope of Maratha history, as well as my purpose here, I have tried to be artistic without being unscientific, sympathetic without being uncritical, and simple without being unhistorical. I have looked at the pattern as a whole without inspecting the details of the parts too minutely, except where they seemed to be of vital importance. While emphasising the perspectives, I hope, I have not been blind to the details so as to distort the picture.

CHAPTER II

SCOPE : INSPIRATIONS AND WARNINGS

'Freedom's battle once begun
Tho' baffled oft is ever won'.
—BYRON

Chronologically this book covers a vast period; 1295-1858. Geographically it comprehends the major part of India which was once brought under Maratha rule. All this area, however, is not denoted by the term 'Maharashtra' used in our context. For all practical purposes, our chief concern here is to trace the roots which still feed contemporary Maharashtra and shape its outlook.

The past is a powerful force that consciously or unconsciously acts on the living present. It is, therefore, not proper to think of it as "dead". The historical process is a continuous whole,—perennial and dynamic. The sap and savour of the fruits would be meaningless without the roots.

Maharashtra today has a distinctive personality evolved in the course of knowledgeable centuries. A correct understanding of this is a *desideratum* in our national integration. The wealth of Maharashtra is not to be assessed merely in terms of its minerals or ecology alone. The character of its people is an invaluable asset to the country as a whole. This has not emerged suddenly into life like Minerva fully equipped from the head of Zeus. Lokamanya Tilak and Vinoba Bhave have had a long spiritual lineage.

There was a time, not very long ago, when Indian nationalism was supposed to have been inspired by its manifestations in the nineteenth century Europe: e. g. by Mazzini in Italy. A closer study of our own history reminded us of Chandragupta Maurya as the first Indian patriot to organise successful national resistance to foreign aggression in India. In its wake was founded the glorious empire of Asoka. Nearer home, Shivaji demonstrated, as Jadunath Sarkar put it, that "the Hindu race can build a nation, found a State, defeat

enemies; they can conduct their own defence; they can protect and promote literature and art, commerce and industry; they can maintain navies and ocean-trading fleets of their own and conduct naval battles on equal terms with foreigners. *He taught the modern Hindus to rise to the full stature of their growth.*"

It is very necessary to bear in mind that the term "Hindu" in the above characterisation of Shivaji implies more than its denominational connotation. To understand its correct usage or political significance in Maratha history we have to go deeper into the annals of the past. It is our purpose in this volume to probe into the contemporary records with a view to ascertaining the relevant facts. These will reveal the true character of the foundations on which modern Maharashtra rests.

When Shivaji decided to make Raigad his capital, it is said, he examined that stronghold very carefully to discover if there was any crevice or loop-hole whose neglect might possibly render it vulnerable. The citadel of our national freedom likewise demands from us a closer scrutiny that we might fortify the weak spots beyond any hazard. There is ample reason to believe that Shivaji drew his own inspiration from a close acquintance with our history, not to apeak of other departments of the Indian heritage. He knew its strong as well as weak points, in the light of which he shaped his policy and actions. It behoves us also to study the heritage or legacy of the Marathas, that we might profit by the inspirations of their achievements and be warned and chastened by their failures. In the absence of a critical and discriminating study of this heritage there is the danger of a sentimental self-glorification leading us into unrealistic and dubious channels of thought and action. History proceeds from the concrete to the abstract, from particulars to the general; and palpable human facts are the best incentives which move men to idealistic conduct. From this point of view, Maratha history affords us very fruitful instruction.

Broadly speaking our study falls into four distinct periods: (i) Preparatory, up to the advent of Shivaji; (ii) Formative, or definitive, in the epoch of Shivaji; (iii) Expansive under

the Peshvas, and (iv) Simmering during the period of frustration, culminating in the flare-up of 1857.

Important as these may appear from different points of view, to our present interest, obviously, the epoch of Shivaji is of cardinal significance. Hence, relatively larger attention is paid in this book to the "founding of Maratha freedom" by the genius of Shivaji, than to its sequel. Nevertheless, to correctly guage the stupendousness of the task confronting the nation, and the Herculean labours that culminated in the liberation of Maharashtra, it is quite essential also to study the antecedents in greater detail than is generally done. This has been attempted at some length in the chapters entitled, respectively, "The Background" and "The Tutelage".

The sudden impact of the Islamic forces under Ala-ud-din Khalji and his successors at the turning of the thirteenth century proved like that of the proverbial 'bull in a China Shop'. South India then was no better prepared than the North to defend itself against the avalanche of external aggressions. Dnanadev's poetic eulogy of Ramadev Rao, in the dedicatory verses of his *Dnaneshwari*, is a pointer to the self-complascence of the generation that was fatally blind to the realities of the political situation. 'The good that men do is oft interred with their bones, but the evil lives long after them.' So it proved in the annals of the Deccan during the period of our survey. Fuller implications of this comment will be realised in the course of further reading, in the chapters which follow. But ominously dark as the clouds were, to begin with, they were not without a 'silver lining.' The seeds of freedom were fostered by many a heroic 'Hampden or Cromwell of the vale' whose valiant, though unavailing resistance flashed like lightning through the gloom of the oppressive atmosphere of those days. Among such were Sankardev and Harpaldev—the 'last ditches' of Devgiri—who died as martyrs in defence of their patrimony at the very dawn of Maharashtra's struggle for freedom. There were among those who followed in their wake two valiant women 'who fought like tigresses and died on the battle-field' resisting the Muslim onslaught—as testified to by the Muslim

chroniclers themselves. The Koli chieftain NagNak of Kondana (Simhagad) and the Shirkes of Khelna gave a foretaste of the Maratha resistance to come. It was sporadic and isolated to begin with, but gathered volume and momentum generation after generation.

When kingdoms and principalities fell like 'ninepins', and each individual had to fend for himself, the *Marathas* did not go to pieces. They wormed themselves, as it were, into the entrails of the Muslim rulers. Some of them, no doubt, were mere self-seeking adventurers, blind to the larger interests of their country and nationality. But out of the total turmoil, before long, arose pioneers of a 'new order' paving the way for the advent of a Shivaji and his creative coadjutors. Shahaji Bhosle was the foremost among such: with the Jadhavs, Ghorpades and Mores as counterfoils. Starting his career as a mercenary, like several others, Shahaji soon became a 'King-maker', relying on his own resources and strength. His letter of protest (d. 6 July 1657), addressed to Adil Shah II, breathes the spirit of the new orientation coming over the older generation, thanks to the *resorgimento* that was in process in Maharashtra since Shivaji (Shahaji's son) came of age : "We have never before served of old till now," he writes, "nor shall we do so in future, under dishonour and displeasure. We shall not further put up with unfair treatment. If Your Majesty will have my services, I claim that my status should be maintained as heretofore." From this attitude to that of Shivaji is not a far cry. In a letter to the Mughal officers, he warned them against foolhardy challenges to him. "Ye are reminded that ... Afzal Khan came against me, on behalf of the Adil Shah, and perished...*Amirul Umra* Shaista Khan was sent against these sky-kissing ranges and abysmal valleys...But at last, as all false men deserve he encountered a terrible disaster, and went away in disgrace. *It is my duty to guard my land:*

'The wise should beware of
this river of blood,
No man can ford in safety
its terrible flood.'

During his far-famed Surat raid, Shivaji told the European merchants there that (as the English records state) 'he was

not come to do any personal hurt to the English or other merchants, but only to revenge himself on Oram-Zeb (the Great Mogol), *because he had invaded his country* and killed some of his relations, etc.'

Finally, on the eve of his coronation at Raigad, Shivaji assured Oxenden that 'after his coronation,.... he would be endeavouring the advancements of commerce and trade in his Dominions, which he could not attend before, being in perpetual wars with the King of Vizapore and the Great Mogull.'

The glorious part played by the Maratha heroes like Baji Prabhu Deshpande, Murar Baji, Tanaji and others, is too well known to demand dilation here. 'In the brave days of old' every Maratha hamlet and home housed heroes and heroines bred in the bone and dyed in the wool.

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, in his *The Discovery of India*, writes: "Shivaji was the symbol of a resurgent Hindu nationalism, drawing inspiration from the old classics, courageous, and possessing high qualities of leadership. He built up the Marathas as a strong unified fighting group, gave them a nationalist background, and made them a formidable power which broke up the Moghul Empire." He further remarks, "...there are glimpses to show that it was not all adventurism, though many adventurers held the field. *The Marathas especially, had a wider conception, and as they grew in power, this conception also grew.* Warren Hastings wrote in 1784: 'The Marathas possess, alone of all the people of Hindustan and Deccan, *a principle of national attachment, which is strongly impressed on the minds of all individuals of the nation*, and would probably unite their chiefs, as in one common cause, if any great danger were to threaten the general state.' Probably this nationalist sentiment of theirs was largely confined to the Marathi-speaking area. Nonetheless, *the Marathas were catholic in their political and military system as well as their habits*, and *there was a certain internal democracy among them. All this gave strength to them.* Shivaji, though he fought Aurangzeb, freely employed Muslims."

Ample evidence to corroborate these observations will be found in this volume as we proceed. Not the least contribution to this sense of national cohesion came from the frater-

nity of the Maratha saints. Superficial acquaintance with their teachings has given rise to the view that, as men too intensely devoted to "other-worldly" aspirations, they inculcated or fostered indifference to all mundane realities. Closer study of their lives and teachings, however, points to a different conclusion. Sufficient has been said about this in the chapter entitled "The Inspiration". But a few remarks here in anticipation will serve to indicate the socio-religious atmosphere of the times: an aspect generally overlooked in current political histories.

It is pertinent to remember that Dnanadev who was the fountain-head of spiritual inspiration then (as ever since) chose to write an impressive and elaborate commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* in the popular dialect and homely idiom. Whatever the metaphysical and mystical import of the text for esoteric philosophers, to the common people, the broad appeal of the *Gita* and the *Dnaneshwari* was an incentive to *action, not escapism.* The emphasis on the duties of a Kshatriya, and the exhortation to Arjuna that 'death is preferable to dishonour', were calculated to inspire resistance to evil rather than to run away from it. Concretely, Janardan Swami and his disciple Ekanath were both *Kiledars* or officers in the fort of Daulatabad. Though, like Shahaji, they were in the service of the Sultans, they were honoured even by their Muslim masters for their spiritual status. It is equally recognised that Swami Ramdas proved a powerful source of inspiration to Shivaji, no less than to the people, in their fight for the resuscitation of *Maharashtra Dharma*, and rightly came to be called *Samarth* (powerful) Ramdas. He converted the *Varkaris* into *Dharkaris: i.e.* pious pilgrims into soldiers of freedom. It made for a "Democracy of Devotees" in which caste and community were no barriers to self-fulfilment. Not only Hindus of all sections and strata of society (Brahmans to Harijans), but also Muslims were included in this egalitarian fraternity of saints. We have in Sheikh Muhammad, a contemporary of Tukaram, Ramdas and Shivaji, an eminent illustration of the cultural synthesis being actively achieved during this period. His recently published *Yoga-Sangrama* is a remarkable work

which amply demonstrates the truth of these observations. The very title-"*Yoga-Sangrama*" is a significant pointer to the integration of the spiritual and secular aspects of the struggle.

The total revolution brought about in Maharashtra by the close of the seventeenth century is justifiably characterised by Ramachandra Pant Amatya (in his famous *Adnapatra*, a unique document) as the creation of an altogether "New Order". Swami Ramdas and the Amatya were, respectively, the spiritual and political mentors of the ill-fated, though heroic, Sambhaji, son of Shivaji. The People's War followed the inhuman slaughter of Sambhaji, culminating in the supercession of the *Chhatrapatis* by the *Peshwas*. But it clearly demonstrated the fact that the Marathas were a close-knit nationality fighting for *Maharashtra Dharma*: 'for the ashes of their fathers and the temples of their gods'; capable of carrying their arms far beyond their homelands, to extend the sphere of their national influence and power.

A cursory review of that glorious struggle for survival will be found in the chapter entitled "The Crisis". The *Adnapatra* said : 'The kingdom was invaded by a powerful enemy in the person of Aurangzeb. He used all his valour and resources in wealth and materials, for the destruction and conquest of this Kingdom. *But all his efforts proved futile by the grace of God.*' This is a revealing statement. It at once puts in a nutshell the nature of the crucial factors in the tense situation in which all the resources of the mighty and opulent Mughal Empire under its relentless Emperor Aurangzeb were flung against the kingless and poor Marathas during well nigh three decades of intense suffering from 'blood, toil and tears'. Yet what sustained the stamina of the people and their determination and courage 'never to submit or yield' was the faith in God reflected in the closing words of the *Adnapatra* cited above; the spirit instilled into the bone and marrow of the nation by the recent examples of Shivaji, Baji and Tanaji, no less than the cumulative momentum gained by the race fighting against the invaders ever since the *Devagiri* of the Yadavas became the *Daulatabad* of the Sultans. No better tribute to this increasingly effective force—apart from

its ultimate triumph—could be given than that of the contemporary chronicler Khwafi Khan who wrote : 'When Raja Ram died, leaving only widows and infants, men thought that the power of the Marathas over the Dakhin was at an end. But Tara Bai, the elder wife of Raja Ram, made her infant son of three years successor to the father, and took the reigns of government into her own hands. She took vigorous measures for ravaging the imperial territory and sent armies to plunder the six *subas* of the Dakhin as far as Sirong, Mandisor, and Malva. She won the hearts of her officers and *for all the struggles and schemes, the campaigns and sieges of Aurangzeb, up to the end of the reign, the power of the Marathas increased day by day* ....' To cut a long story short, in the words of Bhimsen the North Indian chronicler, 'As the Marathas had not been vanquished, and the entire Deccan had come into their possession like a deliciously cooked pudding, why should they make peace ?'

A detailed account of this heroic struggle for survival and freedom (whenever it comes to be written) will form one of the most glorious chapters in the history of free India : it will rank with that of the Netherlands against the Spanish domination, and of Russia against Napoleon and Hitler,—not to speak of the United States against England.

The growth of Maharashtra thereafter took a different turn: the *Svarajya* of Shivaji came to be transformed into the *Samrajya* of the Peshwas. The dynamic forces of history become at times irresistible; but they always work ultimately on the side of freedom. The function of the historian is to draw lessons from the total happenings of the past, whether they redound to the credit of any section of the people or prompt other reflections.

Shivaji had dreamt of "*Hindavi Svaraj*" from his early youth. He achieved this by stages: he first liberated his homeland (around the Sahyadri) from the yoke of the neighbouring Sultans; then he took up the cause of the Deccanis against the Pathan usurpers (at Bijapur),—for which he allied himself with the Qutb Shahi Sultan of Golkonda; thirdly, after his coronation, he stepped into the southern regions of the peninsula, as the legitimate inheritor, not only of Shahaji's

dominions, but also of the legacy of the Vijayanagar Empire. That Empire too had been the outcome of Hindu resistance to Muslim aggression and oppression; but when a stable government was achieved, it set an example of religious toleration testified to by the Portuguese Duart Barbosa in unmistakable terms : 'The King (Krishna Deva Raya) allows such freedom that every man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance, and without inquiry whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor or Heathen. *Great equity and justice is observed by all.*' Such also was the "New Order" established in Maratha *Svarajya* by Shivaji. But 'revolutions are not made with rose water', as the Nizam-ul-mulk once remarked during his revolt agaist the Mughal Emperor; they are a matter of 'blood and iron'. Even the so-called 'bloodless revolutions' are only relatively 'non-violent.' Shivaji, therefore, was no saint like Tukaram. He was a master of strategy as well as stratagem : to wit, Afzal Khan and Chandrarao More. But once his over-all idea was achieved, he proved an exemplary ruler in most respects. Without wanting to elevate even the best of the Peshwas to equality with Shivaji the Great, it is still permissible to look at their total performance from the point of view of the 'founding of Maratha freedom' which is our theme here.

We have made it clear at the very outset that we do not use the term 'Maratha' in any ethnic or communal sense. The Peshwas were all Brahmans with Maratha generals acting under them, obeying their orders and executing their assignments. To cite the most prominent illustration of this non-communal co-operation, we find under Madhavrao I, Mahadji Shinde and Nana Fadnavis acting as the two arms of the Peshwa. They were the last saviours of the Maratha Empire. Their personal characters and careers are a study in contrasts; their ambitions and aspirations too were in different spheres; nevertheless, as shown in a later chapter, their loyalty to the Peshwa—the central authority—symbolised the unity of the Maratha Empire. Despite their personal jealousy in other respects, *vis-a-vis* their common objective of preserving Maratha interests as against their

political rivals, Nana Fadnavis wrote to Mahadji Shinde (in 1789): '*They can never establish their supremacy at Delhi, if the Marathas act vigorously and in union*'. Col. Palmer (British Resident at Poona) justly observed at the death of Nana Fadnavis: 'With him departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government.'

The period of Maratha supremacy under the Peshwas, in the eighteenth century, was one of great turmoil and disruption everywhere in India. The Mughal Empire had visibly gone to pieces. I have elsewhere dealt with this tragic theme in some detail. Here, consistently with our present purpose, only a few strictly relevant remarks should suffice. Further elucidation will come in the proper context in the latter part of this book. As Rustam Ali, author of *Tarikh-i-Hind*, observed: 'As the splendour and delight of the garden of the world and the verdure and fruitfulness of the fields of this earth, depend upon *the flow of the stream of the equity and justice* of kings, so the withering of the trees of this world is caused by the hot winds of the negligence and carelessness of the rulers and dissensions among well-disposed nobles....In a short time, many officers of this Kingdom put out their feet from the path of obedience to the sovereign and many of the infidels, rebels, tyrants and enemies stretched out the hands of rapacity and extortion upon the weaker tributaries and the poor subjects. Great disorders arose in the country.' The fate of the Maratha *Samrajya* did not escape from this general law so poetically enunciated by Rustam Ali.

'When great leaves fall, then winter is at hand;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?'
—Shakespeare.

Not after Panipat (1761), but after the death of the Peshwa Madhavrao I (1772), came the climax and catastrophe of the Maratha adventure. As Grant Duff observed, "The plains of Panipat were not more fatal to the Maratha Empire than the early end of this excellent prince". Najib Khan, the Dictator of Delhi who had (in the view of Afzal Khan at Bijapur) vaunted: "Even when I am dead and buried, I'll eat you all up, with only 10,000 men!" Nonetheless, Maratha troops entered the Mughal capital in February 1771, and eventually

(on 17th December 1772) Mahadji Shinde secured his *Sanad* for Kora and Allahabad from Shah Alam. The great Madhavrao had expired at Thevur just a month before (18th November 1772). The Mughal Emperor, who was still the symbol of Imperial supremacy in India, was released from English custody and reinstalled at Delhi by force of Maratha arms. That triumph was the climax attained by the Marathas under the joint leadership of Mahadji Shinde in the North and Nana Fadnavis in the South.

It is to be remembered that their drive into North India was an inevitable corollary to the situation as it had been evolved by the sheer dynamics of the historical process. 'There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood leads on to fortune.' Bajirao I rose on the crest of a tidal wave. He was the instrument, rather than the creator, of the flood which inundated or drenched the soil of Hindusthan with the blood flowing from Maratha veins and arteries. While personal ambition is a necessary incentive, that alone can achieve little in the absence of favourable opportunities. These two factors are inseparable, and ought to be borne in mind, if we are to assess the advance of the Marathas correctly. Bajirao for all his faults was not a mere wreckless adventurer. He shrewdly restrained himself at the very gates of Delhi, instead of acting like Nadir Shah, though he had the power. In April 1737, he wrote to his brother Chimaji Appa: 'I was resolved to let the Emperor know the truth, to prove that I was in Hindusthan, and show him the Marathas at the gate of his capital.' At the same time he added : 'An act of outrage, however, breaks the thread of politics. We, therefore, gave up the idea of sacking the capital.... The chief thing to be noted is that the Emperor and Khan Dauran wish to make peace with us.'

When Nadir Shah burst into the Punjab and sacked Delhi, Bajirao could have run to the rescue of the hapless Emperor if his hands were free. But, as it transpired, the Marathas were between the devil and the deep sea. The Nizam in the heart of the Deccan, and the Portuguese on the West Coast, called for serious attention. The former was made to feel the might of the Marathas at Bhopal (1738) but he continued to be a thorn in the side of the Marathas for a long time.

The Portuguese too got a good beating at the hands of Baji-rao's brother Chimaji Appa who captured Bassein after a stiff fight (1737).

On the 7th January 1738, the Nizam was compelled to sign the Convention of Durrai Sarai by which he promised to secure for the Peshwa the whole of the fertile province of Malwa, with complete sovereignty over the territory enclosed between the Narmada and Chambal rivers.

Chimaji's victory over the Portuguese at Bassein, and the consequent treaty of April 1737, is significant of two things: (i) it was impressive as a rare triumph over a European power; (ii) its terms were a noble contrast of religious tolera-tion of the Marathas even towards the Portuguese who were notorious for their fanatical persecution of the Hindus in Goa. The Marathas, even at the zenith of their power, cherished the noble example of Shivaji in this important respect. Unfortunately, they deviated from the great Chha-trapati's wisdom in most other respects, and committed blunders that culminated in ultimate failure. These will be examined at the close of this volume before we pass a final verdict on the total performance of these great people. Suffice it here to note that, on the positive side, in the 'founding of Maratha freedom', they displayed several essen-tial virtues which must evoke legitimate pride in their just principles of administration. "Whatever their other lapses," writes Justice Ranade, "it must be admitted in justice to them that, in the matter of the revenue and judicial manage-ment, the Government at Poona showed great powers of application, careful elaboration of detail, and an honest desire to administer well the charge entrusted to them." So too Capt. William Gordon observed in 1739, that, "Baji Rao's territories are well peopled, and the poorer sort, in the farming way, are rendered easy in their rents, which causes his extent of dominion to be in a very flourishing condition."

The British were long regarded as the direct successors of the Mughals in their Imperial role. But a closer study of the history, particularly of the 18th century, shows that the Marathas were the immediate predecessors of the British in the establishment of their dominion all over India. The Mughal Empire was reduced to a mere shadow progressively

after the death of Aurangzeb (1707) until it was derisively said that :—

'The Empire of Shah Alam
Extended from Delhi to Palam.'

Pari passu the Marathas fulfilled the unconscious prophecy contained in Shivaji's royal seal :

'प्रतिपच्चन्द्रलेखेव
वर्धिष्णुर्विश्ववन्दिता...'

'Like the digits of the moon daily increasing, adored by the world...'

They successively eclipsed the Mughals in the North, the Nizam in the Deccan, and Haidar Ali and Tipu in the South. They valiantly resisted the advance of the Afghan Ahmad Shah Durrani, in ostensible defence of the shadowy Mughal Emperor, though it proved catastrophic to themselves on the field of Panipat (1761). But spectacular as that 'showdown' appeared, it only lowered Maratha prestige for a time, but not their essential power. Their triumphant emergence as the premier power in the country has been hinted at before—under the dual leadership of Mahadji Shinde and Nana Fadnavis. But it was becoming increasingly certain that paramountcy would pass on, sooner or later, to their European rivals : the English. The Anglo-Maratha wars have been dealt with elsewhere in this volume with appropriate comments on their vicissitudes of fortune. "It is safe to affirm," writes Sir Alfred Lyall, "that the dividing line between ancient and modern India is marked everywhere by the date at which each province or kingdom fell under British dominion."

The central supremacy of the Marathas was finally overthrown by the British in 1818, when Bajirao II was despatched to Bithur (near Kanpur) as a pitiable pensioner of his hated rivals. Yet the Maratha love of freedom and their determination to try conclusions with their triumphant foreign enemies remained as much alive as in the days of the crisis that followed the death of Sambhaji and Rajaram.

'What though the field
be lost, all is not lost:

'The courage never to
submit or yield...'

The character and methods of the British triumph are best described in the words of Alfred Lyall. He writes : "By swift means or slow, by fair means or forcible, the British dominion was certain to expand, and the armed opposition of their rivals could not fail to be beaten down at each successive collision with a growing European power... Our policy might vary, backward or forward, we still found ourselves mounting step by step to the high office of ultimate arbiter in every dispute and supreme custodian of the peace of all India." But beneath the canopy of the British crown was the simmering discontent of the displaced powers which again flared up in the great uprising of 1857. We are here concerned only to point out that the Marathas played no small part in the volcanic upheaval which, if it was forcibly suppressed as a military revolt, remained as a permanent memory rankling in the heart of the entire nation ever afterwards. Its lessons were not lost upon the minds of the freedom-fighters who followed, merely changing their weapons and tactics. Nana Saheb Peshwa and Rani Laxmibai were glorious martyrs in the cause of national freedom along with a host of other compatriots, who by their 'blood, sweat and tears' paved the way for the advent of fruitful freedom in our own time. Their fuller story will be told in the last chapter. There were among the fighters for freedom, women as well as men, Muslims as well as Hindus, non-Marathas as well as Marathas: just as in the earlier historical phases, briefly reviewed in the foregoing pages. In the Great Rising of 1857, too, the Emperor and the Peshwa were spear-heads of the national *resorgimento:* but the spirit which filled, inspired, and sustained them had its roots deep in the soil of Maharashtra watered by the memories of several centuries of the struggle for freedom since the fall of Devgiri in 1295.

CHAPTER III

THE BACKGROUND

> 'The people of that country had never heard of the Mussulmans; the Mahratta land had never been punished by their armies; no Mussulman king or prince had penetrated so far. Deogiri was exceedingly rich in gold and silver, jewels and pearls, and other valuables.'
>
> —BARANI.

THE CENTRAL fact which provoked the Maratha freedom movement during the seventeenth century of the Christian era was the challenge of Muslim domination. That menace had its portentous beginning in Sind and Multan nine centuries earlier, but its enduring consequences were not realised until long afterwards. Islam was a revolutionary force, and its advent in North India was opposed tooth and nail by the Rajputs for several centuries. Heroic as their resistance was it nevertheless ultimately proved ineffective. The Muslim advance was delayed but not prevented. Was history to repeat itself in South India? Let us follow rather than anticipate the historical process.

Saturday, 26 February 1295 A.D. (19 *Rabi 'u'l-akhar*, 695 H.) was indeed a fateful day for the Deccan and South India. On that date 'Ala-u'd-Din Khalji started from Kara on his historic expedition to Devgiri. The enormous treasure that he got on that occasion, and the ease with which he could gather it, were to him a revelation of the state of things in the South. Firishta reckons it at 600 *maunds* of pearls, 2 *maunds* of diamonds, rubies, emeralds and sapphires, 1,000 *maunds* of silver, 4,000 pieces of silk, besides other precious commodities 'to which reason forbids us to give credit.' In addition to this plunder the cession of Elichpur and its dependencies was also demanded, that the conqueror might leave a garrison there for the collection of revenues to be remitted to him at Kara–Manikpur. 'Ala-u'd-Din determined by this

daring adventure the shape of things to come in the Deccan for several centuries.

Khalji imperialism was sustained on the gold got from the Deccan and South India,—from Devgiri, Warangal, Dvara-samudra, and Ma'bar. 'Ala-u'd-Din made his successful bid for the throne of Delhi being emboldened by the enormous loot he had secured from the Yadava capital. Having murdered his uncle, Sultan Jalal-u'd-Din, and usurped his authority, he was devoured by a zeal for conquest. Ambitious of emulating the example of Alexander the Great, he found additional incentives in religious fanaticism and the greed for gold. In the South he had discovered an El Dorado too tempting to be ignored even in the face of the Mughal raids nearer home. Like Mahmud of Ghazna, he covered his lust for lucre with a fervour for his Faith. It was exceedingly worthwhile despoiling the infidels and desecrating their idol-temples in the name of Islam. If, in addition to this, a Kamal Devi or a Deval Devi could also be secured for the royal *harem*, the *Ghazi* would consider that a heavenly reward. With all this, 'Ala-u'd-Din was a shrewd and practical man. He did not seek to kill the goose that laid the golden egg. During the Warangal expedition he instructed his slave-general, Na'ib Malik Kafur, 'If the Rai consented to surrender his treasure and jewels, elephants and horses, and also to send treasure and elephants in the following year, the Na'ib was to accept these terms and not press the Rai too hard. He was to come to an arrangement and retire without pushing matters too far, lest Rai Ladar Deo (Prataparudra Dev II of Warangal) should get the better of him. If he could not do this, he was, for the sake of his own name and fame, to bring the Rai to Delhi.'

The Khaljis ruled over North India from 13 June 1290, when Jalal-u'd-Din ascended the throne at Delhi, to 8 September 1320, when Ghiyas-u'd-Din Tughlaq Shah was proclaimed Sultan by the army. This was a short but revolutionary regime. The Khaljis inaugurated a military dictatorship of which 'Ala-u'd-Din was the best exponent. "The need for security, internal as well as external, was the dominant note of his policy." He found in South India a rich quarry to support his military rule. Four expeditions were accordingly sent across the Vindhyas under his Na'ib or Deputy,

the famous Malik Kafur who was a *hazar dinari* slave,—a low cast Hindu purchased in Gujarat.

In 1305-7 he had an expedition to Devgiri (2nd since 'Ala-u'd-Din's) on the ostensible ground that Ramdevrao had failed to pay the promised tribute for three years. The next raid was against Prataparudra of Warangal in 1309. His third was a campaign into Mysore (Dvarasamudra) and Ma'bar in 1310-11. In 1312 Malik Kafur once again felt it necessary to invade Devgiri in order to punish Ramdev's son and successor Sankardev. The last Khalji expedition to the Yadava Capital was provoked by the rebellion of Harpaldev, the last ruler of that dynasty, in 1318. This was under Qutb-u'd-Din Mubarak Shah and Malik Khusrau, another Hindu slave of low caste to act as Muslim general. This favourite of the depraved Sultan, however, after a victorious expedition into Warangal and Madura, 'hatched the egg of ambition in his brain' and usurped the throne of Delhi by murdering his master Mubarak Shah.

To understand the easy triumphs of the Muslims during this quarter century (1295—1320) it is necessary for us to study more closely the conditions obtaining in the Deccan and South India at that time. The seven expeditions of the Khaljis into the South were not unlike the seventeen raids of Mahmud Ghazna in the North (1000—27): their aims, character, and results were almost identical. Both the Ghaznavid and the Khalji adventurers were actuated by predatory motives reinforced with religious fanaticism; both were alike tempted by the opulence and political impotence of the infidels. The military advantage in both cases lay with the Muslim aggressors, the revolutionary consequences too were not dissimilar in the two instances. Politically, a portion of the invaded territories nearest to their own kingdoms was annexed by both to serve as a stepping-stone for further encroachments. The Hindus of the South, however, seemed to have learnt nothing from the misfortunes of their co-religionists in the North. Equally rich, equally divided and short-sighted, their frantic and fitful resistance was foredoomed to failure. The immediate result of the Khalji incursions was tragic.

The principal kingdoms to bear the brunt of the Muslim attacks in the South were those of Devgiri of the Yadavas, Warangal of the Kakatiyas, Dvarasamudra of the Hoysalas, and Ma'bar (Madura) of the Pandyas. Among these we are concerned here mostly with the Yadavas; the rest will be noticed only incidentally.

The Yadava dominions consituted the Maharashtra of those times. Of their extent and exact boundaries it is not possible to speak accurately. Epigraphic evidence on such matters is not always reliable. The Yadava rulers, like all their contemporaries, claimed victories and conquests with scant regard for truth. A recent writer, however, has computed that 'During the palmy days of Shinghana, the greatest king of the dynasty, the Seuna (Yadava) authority extended over the whole of Western Deccan, comprising Maharashtra, Northern Konkan, including the districts of North Kanara, Belgaum, Bijapur, Dharwar, Bellary, and portions of the south-western Telugu country.' But, for our purposes, the character of this kingdom is of greater importance than its extent or boundaries. Despite the pompous titles assumed by the Yadava monarchs, such as *Pratapa-chakravartin*, *Samasta-bhuvanasraya*, *Samrat*, and *Sri Prithvi-vallabha*, they proved themselves unworthy of the *Suvarnagaruda-dhvaja* (golden eagle emblem) which they vainly flaunted. Whatever their earlier traditions or achievements in a purely Hindu world, the last three of the glorious Yadavas failed ingloriously in the face of the *Mlenchhas*. 'Ala-u'd-Din could reduce Ramdevrao to submission in the course of twenty-five days. This amazing and ignominious surrender needs the closest scrutiny. It will reveal that there was nothing in it to support the traditional sentiment regarding the Yadava.

From contemporary Muslim and other (local) sources we are able to reconstruct a fairly reliable picture of the situation. From Amir Khusrau we learn that 'Ala-u'd-Din started from Kara-Manikpur on 19 *Rabi-u'l-akhar* 695 H., and returned to that place 'after taking immense booty from Ramdeo' on 28 *Rajab* the same year. According to Wassaf, "He appointed spies to ascertain when the Rai's army was engaged in warfare, and then he adavnced and *took the country without the means*

which other kings think necessary for conquest. The prudent Rai in order to save his life gave his daughter in marriage to the Sultan and made over to him his treasures and jewels." Barani, who followed soon after, states: 'When 'Ala-u'd-Din went to Bhailsan (Bhilsa) he heard much of the wealth and elephants of Deogir. He inquired about the approaches to that place, and resolved upon marching thither from Kara with a large force (3—4,000 horse and 2,000 infantry) but without informing the Sultan..... 'Ala-u'd-Din marched to Elichpur, and thence to Ghati-lajaura .... When Ala-u'd.Din arrived at Ghati-lajaura, *the army of Ramdeo under the command of his son had gone to a distance. The people of that contry had never heard of the Mussulmans*; the Maharatta land had never been punished by their armies; no Mussulman king or prince had penetrated so far. Deogir was exceedingly rich in gold and silver, jewels and pearls, and other valuables. When Ramdeo heard the approach of the Muhammadans, he collected what forces he could, and sent them under one of his *ranas* to Ghati-lajaura. They were defeated and dispersed by 'Ala-u'd-Din who then entered Deogir. On the first day he took 30 elephants and some thousand horses. Ramdeo came in and made his submission. 'Ala-u'd-Din carried off an unprecedented amount of booty.' Isamy alleges that when Ramdev was warned by Kanha (governor of Lajaura) that the Turks were invading his dominions, the heedless monarch dismissed him with ridicule. But the valiant *rana* hastened to the frontier where, with the assistance of two women-warriors, he attempted to stem the tide of invasion. 'The two brave Hindu women who were like tigresses on the battle-field attacked the Turkish army fiercely, thereby exciting the admiration of their foes. Nevertheless the Turks defeated the Hindus and put most of them to death. During the battle, Kanha and the two women were taken prisoner though they fought ever so well. Ibn-i-Batuta says that Ramdev 'submitted and surrendered the city (Kataka or Deogir) without fighting, making valuable presents to his conqueror.'

Firishta, though writing very much later, is supposed to have made use of earlier works which have not survived

since. Substantially agreeing with the accounts cited above, he gives further details. He states that 'Ala-u'd-Din 'enlisted many chiefs of distinction who had formerly been dependants of the Balban family.' Secondly, he says that 'Ala-u'd-Din's army was composed of '8,000 chosen horse.' The first place of any consequence reached by him was Elichpur where, having stopped for a while to refresh his troops, he moved by forced marches to Deogir, '*the lower town of which was not entirely fortified*, the outer wall *being then incomplete*.' Ramdev, with his son Shankardev, was 'absent in a distant part of his dominions.' But, as soon as he heard of 'Ala-u'd-Din's advance, he hastened home and tried to intercept the enemy with a numerous army. For this purpose he threw himself in between 'Ala-u'd-Din and the city and 'opposed him with great gallantry, but was eventually defeated with severe loss.' Firishta has supplemented and, in part, modified this statement by reference to the *Mulhiqat* and the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* thus: 'On reaching Devgiri 'Ala-u'd-Din found the Raja himself in the city, but his wife and eldest son were at worship at a temple at some distance. On the approach of 'Ala-u'd-Din, Ramdev was in the greatest consternation. Having, however, collected 3 000 or 4,000 citizens and domestics, he opposed the Mahomedans at a distance of two *kos* (4 miles) from the city but, being defeated, retired into the fort which had at that time no ditch.' In his great hurry, Ramdev had improvised an army of riff-raffs and domestics to defend his capital city; so too did his men put into the fort salt bags which had been received from the Konkan, mistaking them for grain. The garrison consequently was soon starved into submission. So helpless did the Yadava feel in the grip of 'Ala-u'd-Din, that he tried to dissuade his more spirited son Shankardev (who had meanwhile rushed to the city with a large force) from attacking the aggressor, declaring that the Muslims were 'an enterprising and warlike race, with whom peace was better than war.' The young prince, however, would not be convinced of this until he had tried conclusions with the Turk on the bloody field of battle. This made Ramdev Rao apologise to the conqueror in abject and pitiable terms : 'It must be known to you,' he said to 'Ala-u'd-Din, 'that I had no hand in the late

quarrel. If my son, owing to the folly and petulence of youth, has broken the conditions between us, that event ought not to render me responsible for his rashness.'

'Ala-u'd-Din had so effectively surrounded the place that the inhabitants had no opportunity to escape, which enabled him to levy large sums on the merchants by way of contributions. He had also captured 40 elephants, and several thousand horses belonging to Ramdev in the town. Little wonder that Firishta triumphantly observes: 'We may here justly remark that in the long volumes of history there is scarcely anything to be compared with this exploit, whether we regard the resolution in forming the plan, the boldness of its execution, or the great good fortune which attended its accomplishment.' We learn from 'Isamy that Garshasp (*i.e.* 'Ala-u'd-Din) was greatly pleased with Ramdev; he summoned him to his camp, and treated him with much consideration. He gave back to Ramdev his royal umbrella together with his kingdom, and presented him with two powerful elephants. They then vowed to each other that they would act as father and son; whereupon, Garshasp who had attained his object returned to Kara.'

If the Muslim accounts are to be trusted, the conduct of Ramdev Rao deserved condign punishment. His son Shankardev and his son-in-law Harpaldev, as we shall presently see, behaved more manfully as well as patriotically. But before proceeding to describe their martyrdom we should hold a closer inquest over the ignominious capitulation of the most inglorious of the Yadavas. Dnanesvara's dedicatory lines in his famous work—the *Bhavartha Dipika* or *Dnanesvari*—eulogising Ramdev have misled some writers about the character of his reign.

In the first place, there was little harmony within the royal family. Devgiri was a house divided against itself. On the death of Krishna (1260 A.D.), father of Ramdev, his brother Mahadev appears to have usurped authority taking advantage of the minority of Ramdev. When the latter came of age, he had to secure his legitimate patrimony by means of a palace-revolution. References in contemporary works, like Chakradhara's *Lilacharita* and Bhaskara's *Shishupalavadha*, indicate that 'Ramdev ascended the throne; Amana (Mahadev's son)

was overthrown; and Devgiri underwent a revolution.' (1271). Likewise, Hemadri who was *karanadhipa* under Mahadev (whose son Amana, it is alleged, was cruelly executed by Ramdev, along with several of his supporters) was too orthodox a protagonist of the conservative order to be on good terms with his new master. Besides being the murderer of his late patron's son, Ramdev's religious inclinations were too friendly towards the heterodox (if not heretical) sect of the Mahanubhavas. Hemadri's critics allege that he invited the Muslims to Devgiri, while his defenders charge the Mahanubhavas with being in league with the *Mlenchhas*. Whether the Muslims came of their own accord or in response to an invitation, the result was the same. It is clear that they must have found the internal situation very inviting indeed. Besides the antipathy between the king and his chief minister, sectarianism was rampant within the State: Sanatanis vs. Mahanubhavas, Lingayats vs. Jainas, etc. Some consider the Mahanubhavs more anti-Jaina than anti-Sanatani. This only adds one more edge to the anti-so-many dissensions. The militant sect of the Vira-Shaivas (Lingayats) was born at Kalyani (the Kalachuri capital) in the Deccan only a century before. It was one of the most violent movements ever started against both Brahmanism and Jainism. The Muslim invaders were too ready to exploit these differences. They seem to have exempted the Mahanubhava monks (who wore sable clothes like the Muslim *faqirs*) from paying the *jiziya*, thereby lending a dismal colour to orthodox suspicions about their complicity with the invaders.

One trait, however, was common to all the sects of the Hindus, namely, their antipathy towards all the rest. Besides this suicidal exclusivism, the moral or phychological effect of their total teaching was devitalising. The fourfold way to *Moksha* (viz. *Dnana*, *Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Vairagya*) inculcated by them only seemed to stress in different terms the means of escaping life. At any rate such was its effect on the popular mind. This was the very antithesis of the positive activism of the invading Muslims. To make matters worse, the leadership of Maharashtra then was in the extremely incompetent hands of Ramdev Rao, who despite his pedantic titles (*Gurjarakunjara-dana-kantirava*; *Telingatunga--tarun-*

mulanamatta-dantavala; *Malavapraipa-samana-malayanila*, etc.), as Rajwade has observed, was an unmilitary king. According to the Paithan copperplate inscription, Ramdev granted three villages to 57 Brahmans on condition that (among other indications of good behaviour) *they should use no weapons*! This stipulation, indeed, was superfluous for a people for whom Hemadri had already prescribed an engrossing round of rituals in his *Chaturvarga-Chintamani*. Its *Vrata-*, *Dana-*, *Tirtha-*, *Moksha* and *Prayaschitta-Khandas* left little room for trifling duties like the defence of the State. *Karma* was not as yet *action* in the spirit of the *Gita*, but only one class of ritual.

Marco Polo who sojourned through the land between 1288-93, speaks of the people of Ma'bar as 'going to battle with lances and shields, but without clothing, and are a despicable *unwarlike race*.' They do not kill cattle, he further observes, nor any kind of animals for food; but when desirous of eating the flesh of sheep or other beasts, or birds, 'they procure the Saracens, who are not under the influence of the same laws and customs, to perform the office'. But under better leadership, even such a non-violent people were made to give a better account of themselves by other rulers, as we shall notice later. But Ramdev Rao of Devgiri possessed little grit and found his own sons quarrelling among themselves. A revolt of Malugi, one of his feudatories, is referred to by Rudra Kavi in his *Rashtraudha-vamsa Mahakavya*, wherein Ramdev was taken prisoner, but released by the intervention of Hemadri. Marco Polo also refers to Thana (?) as 'a great kingdom with a language of its own, and a king of its own, *tributory to nobody*.' The sovereignty of the Yadavas over the Konkan appears to have been challenged about this time. According to the poet, above referred to, Malugi's grandfather obtained Tal-Konkan from the Yadava king as his marriage portion, and this territory was extended by the next two rulers of the Mayuragiri Bagula family. After 1322 the land definitely passed out of the hands of the Hindus into those of the 'Saracens who conquered it by force of arms', says Odoricus, 'and are now subject to the emperor of Delhi'.

All this came about because of the initial ineptitude of

Ramdev Rao. Instead of strengthening the defences of his realm he appears to have indulged in futile puerilities. At the moment of the Muslim attack his capital was in a sad state of negligence: the fort was without a moat, the city without an army, and there were not even provisions for the besieged garrison. Even after the shock of the first surprise was over, Ramdev Rao did no better. If 'Isamy is to be believed, 'Ramdev Rao, who remained loyal to 'Ala-u'd-Din sent a secret messenger to Delhi to inform him that a rebellion headed by Sangama (Shankara?)had broken out at Devgiri against the Sultan. He was himself held a prisoner in his palace by Bhilama (Sangama?) and his followers; and he requested the Sultan to send a competent person with an army to put down the rebels and restore the imperial authority.' Malik Kafur appeared before Devgiri, may be in response to this call, on 24 March 1307 (19 *Ramazan* 706 H.). 'Ramdev and his family who were spared by the special command of the Sultan were made prisoner' and sent to Delhi along with enormous booty. According to Firishta, Malik Kafur 'having first subdued a great part of the country of the Mahrattas, which he distributed among his officers, proceeded to the siege of Devgiri, since known by the name Daulatabad. Ramdev being in no condition to oppose the Mahomedan troops, left his son Shankerdev in the fort, and *advanced with presents to meet the conqueror* in order to obtain peace.'

Going to Delhi as a prisoner of war, along with 'rich presents and 17 elephants to pay his respects', Ramdev was '*received with great marks of favour and distinction.*' He had 'royal dignities conferred upon him; the title of *Rai-Rayan* was granted to him, and he was not only restored to his government, but other districts were added to his dominions, for all of which he did homage and paid tribute to the King of Delhi.' The district of Nausari was given to him and a *lakh* of *tankas* for expenses of his journey home. Ramdev continued to pay his annual tribute regularly. Barani also tells us how Ramdev paid obsequious attentions to Malik Kafur, 'as dutiful as any *raiyat* of Delhi,' while he was on his way to Warangal in 1309.

'On approaching Deogir, Rai-Rayan Ramdev came forth to

meet the army with respectful offerings to the Sultan and presents to the generals. While the army was marching through the territories of Deogir, Ramdev attended every day at headquarters. So long as it remained encamped in the suburbs of the city, he showed every mark of loyalty and to the best of his ability supplied Na'ib Kafur and his officers with fodder, and the army with *material.* Every day he and his officers went out to the camp rendering every assistance. He made the *bazar* people of Deogir attend the army and gave them strict orders to supply the wants of the soldiers at cheap rates. The army remained in the suburbs of Deogir for some days resting from its fatigues. When it marched, Ramdev sent men forward to all villages on the route, as far as the borders of Warangal, with orders for the collection of fodder and provisions for the army, and giving notice that if a bit of rope was lost they would have to answer for it. *He was as dutiful as any raiyat of Delhi.* He sent on all stragglers to rejoin the army, and *he added to it a force of Mahrattas, both horse and foot.* He himself accompanied the march several stages and then took leave and returned. *All wise and experienced men noticed and applauded his devotion and attention.*'

Ramdev had fallen never to rise again. Devgiri was made the base of operations against all the southern Hindu kingdoms. Like a drowning person the Yadava monarch was dragging all his possible saviours into the lethal element. For a third time the victorious Malik was at Devgiri on 3 February 1311 (13 *Ramazan* 710 H.); this time to march against Ma'bar and Dvarasamudra. As before, the Rai-Rayan placed all the resources of his State at the disposal of the Na'ib. During this dark period of Hindu history, Maharashtra provided the sinews of war to the Muslim conquerors for the enslavement of the rest of India instead of fighting valiantly 'for the ashes of her fathers and the temples of her gods.' The days of redemption were far off.

In the estimation of Khusrau, the *material*, provided by Ramdev 'was beyond all computation' and included hard and soft goods of wool and leather, brass and iron.

We may not doubt that the King of Devgiri on this occasion was Ramdev, though Barani and Firishta erroneously state

that he was dead. 'Isamy and Khusrau correctly indicate the existence of Ramdev Rao who died only a little after the return of Malik Kafur from his southern campaign. Ramdev's inveterate hostility towards the Hoysala Ballala III is well known. It is, therefore, not surprising that he issued orders to Parsuram Dalavai (whose estates lay on the border,) to guide the Muslim army into Dvarasamudra. Shankardev's hatred of the invaders was too deep-seated to permit him to stoop to such sycophancy. His opposition to 'Ala-u'd-Din had been made clear on the very first occasion despite his father's cowardice. He had ever since continued to be rebellious. In fact, his intransigeance had called for repeated punitive expeditions on the part of the Khalji Sultan. When Ramdev died, therefore, Shankardev once again rose in revolt.

'News reached Delhi,' writes 'Isamy, 'some time after Malik Kafur's return from Ma'bar, that Ramdev died and Bhillama (Śhankardev) revolted. The Sultan sent Malik Na'ib to suppress the rebellion.' According to Firishta: 'Ala-u'd-Din consented to Malik Kafur's proposal, who accordingly proceeded, the fourth time, to the Deccan in the year 712 H. (1312). He seized the Raja of Deogir and inhumanly put him to death. He then laid waste the countries of Kanara, from Dabhol to Chaul, and as far as Raichur and Mudgal. He afterwards took up his residence at Deogir and, realising the tribute from the princes of Telingana and Karnatak, despatched the whole to Delhi.' 'Isamy's description of the settlement of the country appears, on the face of it, exaggerated: 'Malik Kafur,' he says, 'after taking possession of the kingdom treated the people with kindness and moderation. As soon as he entered Devgiri, he assured the people of safety; nobody was slain, and none imprisoned. He despatched letters to all parts of the kingdom declaring general amnesty. These measures restored tranquillity to the mind of the people, and they felt that they had nothing to fear from their new Muslim masters.....Malik Na'ib knew that the prosperity of the State depended on agriculture. So he summoned the cultivators to his presence, spoke to them kindly, and granted them leases. The farmers being convinced that they had a ruler who was interested in promoting their welfare,

devoted themselves to their lands vigorously and extracted greater yield from the soil than ever before.'

This is, obviously, too idealised a picture even to appear plausible. The known policy of 'Ala-u'd-Din towards his infidel subjects ahould make us sceptical about such beneficence. 'Isamy qualifies his statement by saying : 'Though he showed kindness to people who submitted to his authority, he *put down rebels with a stern hand*.' If there were loyalists like Ramdev Rao at Devgiri, there were men too like Kanha and Shankardev, and even women 'who fought like tigresses on the field of battle.' It could not, therefore, have been 'roses, roses all the way'. The peace and prosperity were not for those who opposed; for, towards such, the conqueror was naturally stern. Besides, Malik Kafur was in the Deccan for too short a period to see the fruits of his benevolence. 'He pulled down temples and built mosques in their places,' the same 'Isamy writes. 'He erected in obedience to the commands of the Sultan a great mosque at Deogiri and named it after him. He strove to establish Islam in the land of the Mahrattas and, under his rule, Deogiri became a great Muslim centre in the Deccan.' The good that men do is oft interred with their bones, the evil lives long after them !

Neither Malik Kafur, nor his master 'Ala-u'd-Din, survived long enough to reap the harvest of their sowing in the Deccan. Both died a miserable death at Delhi with whose particulars we are little concerned here. Before the cycle of palace-revolutions was completed at the capital, an epidemic of revolts broke out all over the Khalji dominions. 'At this time,' writes Firishta, 'the flames of universal insurrection, which had long been smothered, began to burst forth and were first apparent in Gujarat..... Meanwhile, the Rajputs of Chitor threw the Mahomedan officers over the walls and asserted their independence, while Harpaldev, the son-in-law of Ramdev, stirred up the Deccan to arms, and expelled a number of the Mahomedan garrisons.'

These rebellions had started even before 'Ala-u'd-Din's breath was stilled in his body. The dying Sultan, it is said, bit his own flesh out of frenzy when he got news of these disorders. But his agony was cut short by his *hazar-dinari* slave and Na'ib of the empire, it is alleged, by poison. Malik

Kafur, having usurped the throne, was himself murdered soon after. It was, therefore, left to Mubarak Shah who succeeded, to quell the revolts. In the second year of his reign, the new Sultan marched into the Deccan to chastise Harpaldev, 'who by the assistance of the other princes of the Deccan had recovered the country of the Marathas.....A detachment was sent in pursuit which brought back Harpaldev prisoner. He was flayed alive, decapitated, and his head fixed above the gate of his own capital. The King then ordered a chain of posts to be established as far as Dvarasamudra, and built a mosque in Devgiri which still remains. He appointed Malik Beg Luky, one of his father's slaves, to command in the Deccan.' (Firishta).

We learn from 'Isamy and Amir Khusrau that, owing to the troubles at Delhi, 'Ain-u'l-Mulk and other officers were recalled post haste 'with all the Muslim inhabitants resident in Devgiri.' The opportunity thus created was promptly seized by Harpaldev and his coadjutors. But the result was catastrophic. Maratha independence, as it then appeared, was extinguished for ever. The historic family of the Yadavas, on whom lay the responsibility of stemming the tide of Muslim advance into South India, was tragically overwhelmed. A few more details of the *denouement* which are available might be noted for their pathetic interest.

'Isamy simply says that Harpaldev was 'despatched to hell.' According to Amir Khusrau, Mubarak Shah 'received the submission of all the *Rais* and *Ranas* of those parts except Raghu, the deputy and minister of the late Rai Ramdeo. Raghu, on learning of the approach of the King, fled to the hills in open rebellion, Khusrau Khan was detached with a powerful army to repel him, and a royal tent accompanied in order to do honour to the expedition. One of his officers named Qutlugh the chief huntsman, seized some of Raghu's adherents from whom it was ascertained that he had nearly 10,000 Hindu cavalry under him. Khusrau Khan attacked him in a defile and completely routed him. The Hindus who had pretended to independence were either slain, captured or put to flight. Raghu himself was most severely wounded; his body was covered with blood, his lips emitted no breath. He entered some cave in a ravine which even a snake could scarcely penetrate.....'

'When Khusrau Khan was returning to the King, after the defeat of Raghu, he received intelligence on the road that Rana Harpal had rebelled and taken up a position in the hills at the head of a powerful army. The Khan went in pursuit of him and was vigorously attacked two or three times by the rebel who in the end, being desperately wounded, was taken captive and his army put to flight. He was brought, bound hand and foot, before the King, who gave orders that he should be put to death. When his way had been taken towards hell by the sword, the King gave his body to the other hellites that this great infidel and little Satan might become one of the chief ornaments of their kingdom. The hellites who had accompanied him out of regard, and had fought by his side, also afforded food to the flames of the infernal regions. *Those hellites did not desire that he should be burnt by himself alone, so they accompanied him into the flames*, and hell was satisfied by that sacrifice'.

Barani's account is somewhat different: 'In the year 718 H. (1318),' he writes, 'the Sultan marched with his *maliks* and *amirs* at the head of an army against Deogiri which, upon the death of Malik Na'ib Kafur, had thrown off its subjection and had been taken possession of by Harpaldeo *and Ramdeo*(?) ...On arriving at Deogiri, Harpaldeo and other Hindus who had joined him were unable to withstand the army of Islam, and they and all the *muqaddams* dispersed, so that the Sultan *recovered the fort without fighting and spilling blood.* The Sultan then sent some officers in pursuit of Harpaldeo who was the leader of the rebels, and had excited the revolt. He was captured and the Sultan ordered him to be flayed and his skin to be hung over the gate of Deogir. The rains came on and the Sultan remained with the army for a time at Deogir. *All the Mahrattas were once more brought into subjection.* The Sultan selected as governor of Deogir Malik Yak Lakhi, an old slave of 'Ala-u'd-Din, who for many years was Na'ib of the *barids* (spies); and *he appointed feudatories, rulers and revenue-collectors over the territories of the Mahrattas.*'

In all the above accounts, what is of greater significance for us is not the fate of Harpaldev as that of Maharashtra. The consequences were far-reaching as well as disastrous, both to the people of Maharastra and the southern peninsula generally.

The latter were able to rally their forces more quickly and build up a rampart sooner than the Hindus of the Deccan. But the fortunes of the two were closely knit together as the sequel will show.

After the execution of Harpal, Mubarak's general Malik Khusrau had marched into Telingana and Ma'bar to complete the work begun by Malik Kafur. But he too like his prototype was soon called to Delhi under very similar circumstances, and partook of the same fate. When ultimately, the Khalji rule was overthrown by the Tughlaqs at Delhi, the new Sultan, Ghiyas-u'd-Din, despatched his son Ulugh Khan (Md. Tughlaq) on the southern campaign. History again repeated itself. The ambitious prince in his turn hastened back to the capital to murder his old father, and occupied his throne. Only two things in the history of Muhammad Tughlaq are strictly relevent to our theme: (1) his change of capital to Devgiri, and (2) the various rebellions of his reign in so far as they had anything to do with the Deccan.

Muhammad's conquest of Telingana, Ma'bar, Kampili and Dvarasamudra extended the dominions of the Sultan beyond the range of efficient control from Delhi. Hence, the idea of establishing a more central capital at Devgiri was a wise and expedient one. We are little concerned with its romantic details here. But, abortive as the plan proved, its net gain to the Muslims was that Devgiri for long proved a centre of Muslim power. Daulatabad became a proud Muslim possession. Its continued occupation by the Khaljis, Tughlaqs, Bahmanis, the Nizamshahi, Qutbshahi, and the later rulers of Hyderabad, is an instructive commentary on the nature of the loss sustained by the Marathas as a result of the Yadava failure to withstand the first Muslim invasion. A stitch in time would have saved more than nine. That the Maratha failure was due to fatal lack of leadership is amply demonstrated by the subsequent happenings. The Muslims of the Deccan, though they were an exotic minority, with better leadership and greater grit, could successfully challenge the overlordship of Delhi and overthrow its domination for several centuries. Had the Yadavas acquitted themselves better, the history of South India might have been different.

Shaikh Mubarak witnessed the fortifications of Daulatabad in progress between 1327 and 1329. The tombs of Muslim celebrities like Amir Hasan (a comrade of Amir Khusrau), Shaikh Burhan-u'd-Din Gharib (a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-u'd-Din Auliya), and Qazi Sharaf-u'd-Din, added to the attraction of the place as a centre of pilgrimage. The consequent increase of the Muslim population in the Deccan, Firistha notes, became a source of alarm to the Hindus. Ibn-i-Batuta who visited Daulatabad during 1334-42 has many interesting observations to make about the contemporary scene.

From Ujjian, writes he, 'we went to Daulatabad, a large and illustrious city which rivals the capital, Delhi, in importance and in the vastness of its lay-out. It is divided into three parts: One is Daulatabad properly so called, reserved for the residence of the Sultan and his troops; the second part is called Katakah (Skt. camp); and the third is the citadel, unequalled for its strength and called Devaiquir (Devgir). At Daulatabad resides the great Khan, Qutlu Khan, preceptor to the Sultan. He is the commandant of the city and represents the Sultan there, as well as in the lands of Saghar, Tiling and other dependencies. The territory of these provinces extends over three months' march and is well populated. It is entirely under the authority of Qutlu Khan and his lieutenants ... It was to the fortress of Devgir that Nasir-u'd-Din (son of Malik Mal) and Qazi Jalal-u'd-Din fled for refuge when they were defeated by the Sultan.

'The inhabitants of the territory of Daulatabad belong to the tribe of Mahrathas to whose women God has granted a peculiar beauty, especially in their noses and eye-brows. They possess talents not found in other women in the art of pleasing men ... The idolators of Daulatabad are devoted to commerce and their principal trade consists in pearls; their wealth is enormous, and they are called *Saha* (Skt. *Sarthavaha*); the singular of the word *Sah*—and they resemble the *Akarims* of Egypt.

'There are in Daulatabad, vines and pomegranates which yield two harvests in a year. By its population, and the

extent of its territory, and the number of very large cities in it, *this province is very important for the revenues derived from it.* It is said that a certain Hindu took lease of the contributions from the province for seventeen crores....'

'In Daulatabad there is a *bazar* for singers and singing girls. This *bazar*, called Tarababad (abode of rejoicing), is among the largest and most beautiful in existence ... In it are mosques for prayer where the priests recite the *tarawih* during the month of *Ramazan.* One of the Hindu rulers, whenever he passed through this place, used to alight in the pavilion and the singing girls sang in his presence. One of the Muhammadan Sultans also did likewise.'

Ibn-i-Batuta proceeded from here 'to the small town of Nazarbar inhabited by Marathas well skilled in the mechanical arts.' Their physicians, astrologers, and nobles, he says, 'are called Brahmins and Kshatriyas. Their food consists of rice, vegetables, and oil of sesami, for *they dislike giving pain to animals or slaughtering them.* They wash themselves before eating, as we do at home to get rid of a pollution. They do not marry among their relatives at least up to the seventh remove; neither do they drink wine. For this in their eyes is the greatest of sins. It is so in all India, even among the Muslims; any one among them that drinks wine is punished with 80 stripes and imprisoned for three months in a dungeon which is opened only during meal-time.

'From Nazarbar we went to Saghar, a large city on a considerable river (Tapti–Gibb) of the same name. On the banks of this river, we see water-wheels, and orchards where grow mangoes, bananas, and sugar-cane. *The inhabitants of this city are peaceable, religious and upright men, and all their acts are worthy of approbation.* There are orchards with hermitages meant for travellers. The population of Saghar is very large. Strangers go there for the company of the people, and because the town is exempt from taxes and duties.'

Maharashtra was so much demoralised by the Khalji conquest that it submitted as a matter of course to the yoke of the Tughlaqs. If there were frequent revolts in the Deccan, as elsewhere, during this period, they were not by the Marathas. The first of these was Malik Yak Lakhi before the

accession of Muhammad Tughlaq. There were no fewer than twenty-one rebellions in the reign of this erratic monarch. Of these only five were connected with the Deccan. Their account is relevant and instructive if only because the Marathas never could make capital out of them, but allowed the Muslims to perpetuate their hold over the Deccan ultimately by the establishment of a local kingdom of their own, *viz.* the Bahmani. That this ineptitude or political impotency was not shared by all the Hindus of the South was demonstrated by the foundation of the virile Vijayanagar kingdom, south of the Tungabhadra river.

The most disconcerting insurrection for Muhammad Tughlaq was that of Baha-u'd-Din Garshasp in 1327. It did not originate in the Deccan, but, according to Firishta, the first battle of the war against him was fought near Devgiri. The Sultan came from Delhi to Daulatabad in pursuit of the rebel and directed his military operations from there. Garshasp escaped, first to Sagar and thence to Kampili whose Hindu Raja gave him shelter. Reinforcements sent from Devgiri brought about the defeat of the rebel as well as his supporters. Though Garshasp was the King's cousin, he was according to Ibn-i-Batuta flayed alive and his flesh cooked with rice was served to his family! The Raja of Kampili died, chivalrously fighting for his protege. His stuffed head was carried to the Court as a trophy, while his sons and important officers of state were taken prisoner. Firishta says that Muhammad thought of shifting his capital to Devgiri after this rebellion. Accordingly he called it Daulatabad, 'raised several fine buildings within it and excavated a deep ditch round the fort which he repaired and beautified. On the top of the hill whereon the citadel stood, he formed new reservoirs for water and made a beautiful garden.'

Then the Sultan marched to Kondana (Simhagad) where 'Nag-nak, a Koli chieftain, opposed him with great bravery but was forced to take refuge within his walls. As the place was built on the summit of a steep mountain, inaccessible but by one narrow pass cut through the rock, the King had no hopes of reducing it but by famine. He accordingly caused it to be closely blockaded, and at the same time made some attacks on the works in which *he was repulsed with heavy*

loss. The garrison distressed for provisions, and having no hopes of the King's retreat, at length evacuated the fort at the expiration of eight months, after which the King returned to Daulatabad.'

The next trouble arose in Ma'bar but its repercussions were felt in Maharashtra. When Muhammed Tughlaq heard of the revolt of Sayyed Jalal-u'd-Din, he proceeded to Daulatabad (1335) and '*laid a heavy contribution on that city and the neighbouring provinces which created an insurrection; but his numerous army soon reduced the insurgents to their former state of slavery.*' He did not, however, meet with the same success in the Ma'bar expedition. At Warangal, 'a pestilence broke out in his camp to which a great part of his army fell victim. He had on this occasion nearly lost his life, and was induced to leave one of his officers, Malik Na'ib 'Imad-u'l-Mulk, to command the army, and to return himself to Daulatabad.' On his way thither, he suffered from a tooth-ache wherefore he got his aching tooth extracted and ceremoniously buried at Beer (Beed) 'and caused a magnificent tomb to be reared over it, which still remains a monument of his vanity and folly.' At Mungi-Paithan he conferred the title of Nasrat Khan upon Shihab-u'd-Din Multani and made him governor of Bidar and its dependencies which yielded an annual revenue of a *crore* of rupees. He, at the same time, appointed Qutlugh Khan, who was the Sultan's tutor in early life, to the government of Daulatabad and the country of Maharashtra. In 1338-39 (740 H.) Nasrat Khan misappropriated the royal revenues and rebelled. Qutlugh suppressed the revolt and sent Nasrat as a prisoner to Delhi. Soon after followed the insurrection of 'Ali Shah who killed the Hindu officer of Gulbarga and seized the government treasury. He was an 'Amir Judida' or Mughal recently converted to Islam and sent to the Deccan for revenue collection. 'Finding no legitimate authority in the country, he summoned together his Mughal brethren, raised an army, and occupied Gulbarga and Bidar on his own account.' This rebellion was also put down by Qutlugh Khan with the help of the Malwa army.

The eighteenth revolt against Muhammad Tughlaq was that of 'Ain-u'l-Mulk. It was occasioned by the transfer of

that officer to Daulatabad (1340). Qutlugh Khan was recalled to Delhi on a charge of misgovernment and abuse of authority. But, as a matter of fact, he appears to have been a popular and pious governor. According to 'Isamy, when the 'pious Khan' left for Delhi, 'even the walls cried out (or echoed the people's wails) that all that was good was now departing from the Deccan.' The remedy, however, proved worse than the disease. 'So extremely ill did his arrangement turn out that the people, disgusted at the removal of Qutlugh Khan and the want of capacity displayed by the new administration, rebelled in all quarters and the country was devastated and depopulated in consequence. To make up the deficiency of the revenue, as well as to gratify their own avarice, the Deccan officers plundered and oppressed the inhabitants.'

In the history of the fateful forty-five years (1295-1340) traced by us so far, the one distressfully disappointing feature has been the absence, in Maharashtra, of the will to resist, barring a few noble exceptions like Kanha and the two valiant women, Shankardev and Harpaldev, Raghu and Nag-nak, the spirited Koli chief of Kondana. The people of Maharashtra were conquered, oppressed and humiliated, but they meekly submitted like dumb-driven cattle. A sixteenth century Marathi work embodying earlier traditions dolorously records: 'There are too many Yavanas (Muslims) in the country; the people are without patriotism; arms have been discarded they have taken to agriculture; some have sought service; several people have died; many have lost their sense of duty.' Sporadic instances of courage are indeed available, but only in support of the Muslim rebels. Thus we learn that a raja of Thana (? Badahra or Burabrah) afforded shelter to Malik Hoshang, but the latter subsequently recanted. 'The rajas of the Deccan,' writes Firishta, 'suffering under the tyranny of Delhi, rejoiced at the revolt of the Muslims in which some joined, while others, more circumspect, only privately encouraged it and assisted the rebels with money and supplies. Only once do we come across a local chieftain called Kandhra (at Gulbarga) who, in mad desperation, put to death a number of Muslims, a month or two after the accession of Nasir-u'd-Din, the first independent Muslim King

of Daulatabad. He too being defeated, put himself in communication with the Delhi officers but was driven away by Zafar Khan.

The sovereignty of the Sultans of Delhi over the Deccan was overthrown, not by the Hindus, but by the Muslim officers themselves. Muhammad Tughlaq had sent an army to suppress the wide-spread revolt of the 'Amir Judida' of Raichur, Mudgal, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur, Gunjoti, Raibag, Gilghuri, Hukeri, and Berar (Firishta). 'On arriving on the Deccan frontier, at Manukpoonj pass, fearing the King had a design on their lives, they entered into a confederacy and with one accord fell upon the guards.' The insurgents got the better of the Delhi army, besieged Daulatabad, killed many of the King's officers, and appropriated the treasury. Finally, they proclaimed one among themselves, 'Ismail, King of the Deccan with the title of Nasir-ud-Din. Muhammad Tughlaq did not live to suppress this revolt. He was hunted out by the rebels much like Aurangzeb by the Marathas of a later generation. While he was pursuing other rebels in Gujarat, the Sultan got news of the defeat and death of the royalist general 'Imad-u'l-Mulk. The imperial army was driven into Malwa. *Thus began the independence movement in the Deccan; but it as* [a]*independence of the Muslims, not of the Marathas.*

On Friday 24 *Rabi'u'l-akhar* 784 H. (12 August 1347) the crown was placed on the head of Zafar Khan, and a black canopy (the colour assumed by the Abbasid khalifas) was raised above the throne. The *khutba* was read and coins were struck in the name of 'Ala-u'd-Din Hasan Shah Bahmani. He made Gulbarga his capital, and called it Hasanabad. 'Having assumed charge of his government, Hasan Shah neglected none of his duties and his dominions daily increased; so that in a short time (writes Firishta) the territory from the river Bhima to the vicinity of the fort of Adoni, and from the port of Chaul to the city of Bidar, was brought under his authority.'

This kingdom of Gulbarga (Bahmani) was not the only Muslim State to rise out of the ruins of the Khalji-Tughlaq dominions in the South. Sayyid Jalal-u'd-Din Ahsan Shah, governor of Ma'bar, likewise 'rebelled, usurped power,

killed the lieutenants and agents of the sovereign, and struck coins of gold and silver in his own name,' writes Ibn-i-Batuta (1334-35). *This Sultanate*, however, proved ephemeral, as *it was extinguished by Vira Kampana (c. 1378) which event has been celebrated by his queen Ganga Devi in her charming epic entitled Madura Vijayam or Kamparaya-Charitam*, an historical poem of rare merit. *Kampana was the son of one of the founders of the great Vijayanagar power.* Referring to this last event, namely, the establishment of the Vijayanagar kingdom, Firishta observes: 'The confederate Hindus seized the country occupied by the Muslims in the Dakhin and expelled them, so that within a few months, Muhammad Tughlaq had no possessions in that quarter except Daulatabad.'

The rise of this great Hindu power in South India is a very important and fascinating theme with whose foundation alone we are here concerned. Its influence upon Maratha history will be appropriately dealt with in a later chapter. Arising out of very similar conditions as those which obtained in the Deccan, *Vijayanagar grew into a mighty defender of Hindu civilization for two centuries and a quarter (1336-1565)*. Its genesis provides an instructive contrast to the depressing story of the Hindus further north, during the same period. Warangal, Kampili and Dvarasamudra had been equally overrun by the Muslim invaders; but their reactions were quite different from those witnessed by us in the Deccan.

Two pieces of evidence should suffice to illustrate the results of Muslim aggression in the Andhra and Karnatak countries : An epigraph in the former region records: 'After the death of Prataparudra, the earth was engulfed in the ocean of darkness of the Turushka rule. *Adharma*, which had been kept under control up to that time by that virtuous monarch, flourished under them unchecked as the existing conditions were favourable for its growth. The cruel wretches subjected the rich people to torture for the aske of their wealth; many of their victims died of terror at the sight of their vicious countenances. The Brahmins were compelled to abandon their religious practices; the images of the gods were overthrown and smashed to pieces; the learned were deprived of the *agraharas* which had been in the possession of their

families from time immemorial; and the agriculturists were despoiled of the fruits of their labour, and their families were impoverished and ruined. None dared to lay claim to anything, whether it was a piece of property or one's own wife. To those despicable wretches wine was the ordinary drink, beef the staple food, and slaying the Brahmin the favourite pastime. The land of Telinga, left without a protector, suffered destruction from the Mussulmans like a forest subjected to a devastating wild fire. In very similar language Ganga Devi writes: 'In the *agraharas* (of the temples) where the smoke issuing from the sacrifical fires was largely visible and where the chant of the *Vedas* was always audible, we have now the offensive smelling smoke from roasted flesh, of the Muslims; and the harsh voice of these ruffians is alone heard there.'

Two inscriptions (one of 1341 and another of 1376) speak of Sangama, father *of the founders of Vijayanagar*, as having been born in fulfilment of a divine promise to deliver the country from the hands of the *Mlenchhas*. A later epigraph (of 1652) says that Vijayanagar was founded 'for the protection of gods, cows and Brahmans.' Making due allowance for the idiom of poetry in the above notices, we can yet perceive the historical facts imbedded in them. To follow their political reactions we have only to score the pages of Barani and Firishta.

'A revolt of the Hindus broke out in Arangal (Warangal),' writes Barani. 'Kanya Nayak had developed strength in the country. Malik Maqbul, the Na'ib Wazir fled to Delhi and reached there in safety. The Hindus captured Arangal which was entirely lost. At this time, one of the relations of Kanya Nayak (Harihara?) whom the Sultan had sent to govern Kampili, apostatised from Islam, and broke into rebellion. The land of Kampili was lost and fell into the hands of the Hindus, and Deogir and Gujarat alone remained in the possession of the Sultan. Firishta adds a few more circumstantial details: 'About this time,' says he, 'Krishna Nayak, son of Ladar Deo (i.e. Prataparudra-deva), who lived in the vicinity of Warangal, went to Belal Deo (Vira Ballala III of Dvarasamudra), the powerful King of Carnatic, and told him that the Muhammadans had entered *Telingana and Carnatic* and had made up

their minds to exterminate the Hindus. He suggested that something should be done to avert the crisis. Belal Deo called a meeting of his ministers, and, after a good deal of deliberations, decided that, leaving his provinces in the rear, he should advance to the route of the armies of Islam, and deliver Ma'bar, Dvarasamudra and Kampili from Muslim control, and place them in the charge of Krishna Nayak. In accordancc with this plan, Belal Deo founded in the mountainous region near the frontier of his kingdom, in a well fortified place, a city which he named..... Bijanagar. Numerous horse and foot soldiers were sent under Krishna Nayak, and Warangal was captured. The governor 'Imad-u'l-Mulk fled to Daulatabad. *Belal Deo and Krishna Nayak both combined their forces and delivered Ma'bar and Dvarasamudra*, which had been for years in the past tributaries of the ruler of Carnatic, *from Muslim control*. On all sides the flames of war and rebellion were kindled, and of the distant provinces nothing remained in the possession of the Sultan except Gujarat and Devgir, (1336). Even this last stronghold, as we have already noticed, was lost to Delhi in 1347. South India thus stood divided into two groups: the Bahmani kingdom in the Deccan, and the Vijaynagar kingdom to the south of the Tungabhadra river. The struggle between the two and their respective successors constitutes the long prelude to the glorious war of independence which the Marathas of the 17th and 18th centuries carried on, and as a result of which they came very near to being the sovereign masters of the whole of India. But, for that consummation, the Marathas had to undergo a prolonged period of probation, which must engage us in the next three chapters.

CHAPTER IV

THE TUTELAGE

> "Thus was the ground prepared partly by nature, partly by the ancient history of the country, partly by the religious revival, but *chiefly by the long discipline in arms* which the country had undergone under Mahomedan rule for three hundred years."—M. G. RANADE.

THE Bahmani kingdom, of whose foundation we spoke in the preceding chapter, endured for nearly 180 years (1347-1526. But its effective existence came to an end with the murder of Mahmud Gawan in 1481). With him, wrote Meadows Taylor, 'departed all the cohesion and power of the Bahmani kingdom.' Out of his dominions were carved out (i) the Imadshahi of Berar in 1484; (ii) the Adilshahi of Bijapur in 1489; (iii) the Nizamshahi of Ahmadnagar in 1490; (iv) the Qutbshahi of Golkonda in 1518; and (v) the Baridshahi of Bidar in 1526. What place did the Marathas fill in the history of these kingdoms? Ranade has observed that their entire administration was permeated with Maratha personnel. Grant Duff has written : 'It (the Bahmani kingdom) was aided by the native princes of the Deccan, and from several circumstances in the conduct of war, particularly the desultory plan adopted by the insurgents (who founded the kingdom), which always requires the aid of the native inhabitants of any country, *there is strong presumption of their having contributed more to its success than the Mussulman historian was aware of, or, perhaps was willing to allow.*'

Ranade also pointed out that the foreign mercenaries (Turks, Persians, Abyssinians and Mughals) employed by the Deccan Sultans proved more troublesome than useful, and that gradually reliance came to be placed chiefly upon the country *Bargirs* and *Shiledar* troops. 'This training in arms brought education, power, and wealth with it, and in the sixteenth century we meet with Ghadges and Ghorpades, Jadhavs and Nimbalkars, Mores and Shindes, Dafles and Manes,

as generals in charge of ten or twenty thousand horses, and in enjoyment of proportionate *jahagirs*.' It is our purpose, in this chapter, to assess the nature of this tutelage of the Marathas under their Muslim masters during the two and a half centuries which preceded the rise of Shahaji Bhosle, father of the great Shivaji. This is by no means an easy task and we should particularly guard ourselves against hasty generalizations, both as regards the character of Muslim rule and policy in the Deccan, as well as the nature of the Hindu reactions and response. The fact that some of the Sultans were originally Hindus or married Hindu wives led Ranade to believe that 'these influences exerted a power which made it impossible for Mahomedan powers to retain their bigotry and fanatic cruelty in the Deccan, and (that) although there were irruptions of violence now and then, on the whole great toleration was shown towards their Hindu subjects by these Mahomedan kings, and gradully both civil and military powers came into Hindu hands.' Closer examination, however, reveals that the cause of the considerable employment of Hindus in the civil and military services of the Sultans lay outside their policy of religious toleration which was exaggerated by Ranade and some others beyond what is warranted by the facts of the situation. Indeed, consanguinity had little to do with the so-called liberal policy of the Mahomedan kings of the Deccan.

In the first place, the subjugation of the Hindus by the Muslims was never completed in western Maharashtra and Konkan. The latter was not conquered till the middle of the fifteenth century, and the Ghatmatha of the Mavals were never subdued in the sense in which the Desh was. The reasons for this will become clear as we proceed. Secondly, the Muslim conquerors of the Deccan were considerably weakened by their isolation, being cut off from the stream of perennial replenishment like their coreligionists in North India. They further undermined their own strength by perpetual quarrels among the Deccani and Foreign parties. The murder of Gawan was an indicator of this suicidal hatred and factiousness. Opportunities were thus amply provided for the enterprising and pushful Marathas, alike by the paucity of the Muslims in the Deccan and their disunity. But there

was no uniformity of conditions all over the country, nor in the same tract of land under different rulers. We should therefore make a careful survey of the various parts of the Deccan and Maharashtra under its several dynasties during the three centuries that preceded the advent of Shivaji, namely, 1347-1630.

We have already noted that, under Hasan Shah, the founder, the Bahmani kingdom stretched from Daulatabad, in the north, to Adoni in the south, and from Chaul, in the west, to Bidar in the east, according to Firishta. The same writer tells us that 'Ala-u'd-Din (Hasan Shah) divided his kingdom into four *atraf* or provinces viz. (i) Ahsanabad-Gulbarga (the Krishna-Tungabhadra Doab up to Dabol); (ii) Daulatabad (including Junnar, Chaul and Paithan); (iii) Berar (including Mahur); and (iv) Bidar (including Qandhar, Indur, Kaulas, and part of Telingana). With minor variations this administrative arrangement continued down to the days of Mahmud Gawan who made substantial alterations in it. By that time the kingdom had grown in extent and covered, not only the table-land of the Deccan up to the Ghats, a portion of Telingana and the Raichur Doab but also the Konkan down to Goa (in the west) and the whole of Andhra (in the east and south). Besides, Khandesh was a protectorate in the North. Gawan reduced this unwieldy Empire to order by dividing it into provinces of moderate size, each under a *Sarlashkar*. Berar was cut into two parts: Gawil and Mahur; Daulatabad and Junnar divisions extended up to Daman, Bassein, Goa, and Belgaum; Bijapur, up to the Hora river including Raichur and Mudgal; Ahsanabad-Gulbarga, from Sagar to Naldurg with Sholapur; and Telingana included Rajamundry and Warangal. 'Apart from nearly having the old provincial areas, the Khwaja removed certain tracts from the jurisdiction of each of the new governors, bringing them directly under the control of the king himself as the *Khasa-i-Sultani* or Royal Domain, thus putting a strong royal check on the power of the *Tarafdar* in his own province.' This was a wise precaution reminding us of the reforms of William the Conqueror in England and of Kleisthenes in ancient Athens.

For greater efficiency, Gawan also reorganised the army and the revenue system. He made it a rule that there should be

no more than one fortress under the direct command of each *Tarafdar*. *Qile'dars* of all other strongholds were to be appointed and controlled directly by the central Government. The obligations of the *jagirdars* and *mansabdars* were more strictly defined in terms of definite contingents to be maintained by them, for which they were paid. A *mansabdar* was to receive one *lakh* of *hons* (later raised to $1\frac{1}{4}$ *lakhs*) annually for every 500 men under arms. Where *jagirs* were granted in lieu of cash payment, compensation was allowed to cover the collection charges; but if the stipulated number of men was not maintained, a proportionate amount was deducted (or had to be reimbursed). A systematic land survey was also carried out, fixing the boundaries of villages and towns and regulating the revenue assessment.

The Muslim population being comparatively small, the working of these reforms, as well as the normal administration, necessitated increasing dependence on the Hindu personnel. Under the Khaljis and Tughlaqs, there were frequent withdrawals of the Muslim officers from the Deccan to meet the exigencies in the North. Twice at least we have noticed that the repatriation was on a large scale: (i) When Malik Kafur recalled 'Ain-u'l-Mulk 'with all the Muslim inhabitants resident in the city (of Daulatabad)'; (ii) When Muhammad Tughlaq relinquished his second capital. Incidents of this nature encouraged insurrections on the part of even the Muslim officers. With the establishment of the Bahmani kingdom, contact with the North was almost completely cut off. Only such Muslims as elected to settle in the South permanently alone remained. Occasionally a fortune-hunter came from outside. The number of converts, though growing, was not very large. Despite the strength of their polygamous *harems* and fecundity, the rulers found it necessary to augment their numbers by inviting foreign immigrants. But the remedy soon proved worse than the disease. The local Muslims hated the newcomers and gave rise to constant civil strife resulting not infrequently in murderous orgies. 'While the Delhi aristocracy and its early representatives in the South', writes Profesosr Sherwani, in his life of Mahmud Gawan, 'were mostly of Central Asian Turki stock or of Afghan heritage, the newcomers of the South came mostly from the

coast round the Persian Gulf or from further North, as far as the strip of territory on the south of the Caspian Sea, being mostly Syeds from Najaf, Karbala and Medina, and Persians from Sistan, Khurasan or Gilan.' The conflict between the Northerners—with their Habshi (Abyssinian) subordinates (who had settled down earlier in the Deccan)—and the newcomers from Iraq and Iran, led to precipitate the downfall of the Bahmanis.

The importance of the Hindus becomes quite obvious in the light of the above conditions. The attitude of the Hindus towards the *Mlenchhas* is illustrated by Firishta's observations on the forced marriages effected by the conquerors (e.g.between the daughter of Dev Rai of Vijayanagar and Firuz Shah Bahmani). 'Though the Rais of the Carnatic had never before given their daughters in marriage to any persons but those of their own caste', he writes, 'and *deemed it degrading to intermarry with strangers*, yet Dev Rai, out of necessity, complied.' We have no reason to expect the Hindus of the Deccan to have been less conservative or orthodox.

From the beginning, Hindus must have been largely employed in the civil administration. With the lapse of time, they came to be recruited also in the armies in increasing numbers. We have no statistical records to enable us to determine the proportion of Hindus in the Deccani forces employed in the so-called '*jihad*' against the 'infidels' of Vijayanagar, but we cannot regard these medieval wars as wars of religion. Equal ferocity and destructive zeal were exhibited by all the belligerents whether the fighting was among co-religionist or against the followers of another religion. The recorded instances of slaughter and demolition of sacred places are, therefore, to be looked upon more as 'acts of war' than 'facts of fanaticism'. The Hindu rulers of Vijayanagar soon learnt to enlist Muslim mercenaries in their armies even as the Sultans of the Deccan had enrolled Hindus.

The policy of the Bahmani rulers towards their infidel subjects may be best expressed in the words of Mahmud Gawan (used by him in another context). According to him 'the principles of justice and the causes of domination and subjection' were that 'those who of their own free will and without any compulsion acted according to the principles of

the *Qur'an* and the *Hadis*, wore the turban of freedom, while those who put a cap of pride on their heads with the hand of denial fell from the steed of authority'. Again, 'Some rose from the stage of subjection to elevated pedestals of high office and others, through good fortune, sat on royal thrones'. In clearer terms we might state that 'submission to Islam was for the Hindus the highroad to promotion, while defection from it or opposition was the surest way to fall from the steed of authority'. This is amply borne out by the doings of the Sultans.

'Ala-u'd-Din Hasan, the just Bahmani king, conquered territories belonging to the Muslims not less than to the Hindus. But the *Burhan-i-Ma'athir* declares, that Hasan Kangu ordered his generals to devastate and plunder the country of the infidels soon after his assumption of royal authority. The writer also adds that Hasan '*did much towards propagating the true Faith.*' Firishta describes his successor, as well, as '*a champion of the true religion*'. The greatest of the Bahmani Sultans, namely Firuz Shah, who usurped the throne on 14 February 1397, was, according to the *Burhan-i-Ma'athir*, 'a good, just, and generous king who supported himself by copying the *Qu'ran*, and the ladies of his harem used to support themselves by embroidering garments and selling them. Among his electic tastes were hard drinking, a passionate fondness for music, and addiction to a seraglio with an assortment of women drawn from several nationalities. In his war against Vijayanagar, he left 'the roads littered with the bodies of the slaughtered Hindus,' though he agreed to release his Brahman prisoners of war on payment of ten *laks* of *hons*. The Hindus when they won a victory over him, in 1419, mercilessly butchered their enemies, desecrated their mosques and ravaged their country. In the graphic words of Firishta, 'The Hindus made a general massacre of the Mussulmans, and erected a platform with their heads on the field of battle. They followed the Sultan into his own country, which they wasted with fire and sword, took many places, broke down many *mosques* and holy places, slaughtered the people without mercy; by their actions seeming to discharge the treasured malice and resentment of ages'.

Under the next Bahmani King, Ahmed Shah, the capital was shifted from Gulbarga to Bidar. Dr. Ishwari Prasad has characterised this ruler as a ferocious bigot and a cruel tryant. But the Muslim chronicler says that 'his disposition was adorned with the ornament of clemency and temperance, and with the jewel of abstinence and devotion'. Our particular interest in his reign is confined to his doings in the Konkan.

Western Maharashtra was the real cradle of native independence. Even under the Yadavas, we have observed how, according to Marco Polo, the ruler of Thana owned no master above him. Another such instance is that of the chief of Baglan who successfully defied Ramdev Rao. Ibn-i-Batuta has noticed that there was a Muslim principality at Honavar and Goa. 'There are two towns in the interior', he writes, 'one an ancient construction of the infidels, and the other built by the Mussulmans when they first conquered the island (of Sandabur or Goa). In the latter there is a great cathedral *mosque* comparable to the *mosques* of *Baghdad*: it was founded by Hasan, father of the Sultan Jamal-u'd-Din Muhammad of Hanaur'. This place was later annexed by Vijayanagar, and the Muslim dominion was rendered precarious and unreal over the west coast. Marco Polo alludes to the rich trade of the Konkan in finely dressed leather, cotton goods, gold and silver, though the sea was infested with pirates. Bahmani boats occasionally put out to sea from Dabol and Chaul to bring commodities to the Kingdom from diverse maritime centres.

In 1403, Khalaf Hasan Basri (Malik-u't-Tujjar) was ordered by Sultan Ahmad Shah Bahmani I, to subdue the coast. But the territory round Mahim was disputed by the Sultan of Gujarat. Conflict was, however, averted by the intervention of some holy men on either side. In 1436, the Hindu *raja* of Sonekhair was defeated, and he agreed to give his daughter in marriage to 'Ala-u'd-Din II. Eleven years later, Malik-u't-Tujjar was again dispatched to the Konkan (1447). But the Muslims this time suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Hindus. There was division and suspicion of treason in the invader's camp. They retired to Chakan where the Deccani faction entertained the foreign Muslims with the *sherbat* of destruction and the sword of tyranny; so that about

1,200 Sayyids of pure lineage and nearly 1,000 other foreigner (from 7 to 18 years of age) were put to the sword'. Firishta's account of the Hindu resistance to Bahmani is worthy of being noticed in full because of the light it throws upon the condition of the country and the spirit of the people. In it are to be found the seeds of the future Maratha revolt which was to spread out triumphantly in ever-widening circles.

'At this time', writes the historian, 'Meamun Oolla Deccany formed a plan for reducing to subjection all the fortresses along the sea-coast. To effect this, the King deputed Mullik-oot-Toojar with 7000 Deccany infantry and 3000 Arabian cavalry, besides his own division, to the west. Mullik-oot Toojar, fixing upon Chakan as his seat of government, secured the fort near the city of Joonere, from whence he sent detachments at different times into Concan, and reduced several *rajas* to subjection. At length he moved to that country in person, and laid siege to a fort the *raja* of which was named Shirka, whom he speedily obliged to surrender and to deliver himself and family into his hands.

'Mullik-oot-Toojar insisted that Shirka should embrace the faith of Islam or be put to death; upon which the subtle infidel, with much assumed humility, represented that there existed between him and Shunkur Ray who owned the country round Khelna (Vishalgad) a family jealousy and that should he enter into the pale of Islam, and his rival remain secure in the full possession of power, he would, on the general's retreat, taunt him with ignominy on account of his change of religion, and excite his own family and subjects to revolt; so that he should lose the countries his ancestors had held for ages. Raja Shirka added, however, that if M. would reduce his rival Shunkur Ray of Khelna and give his country either to himself or one of his officers, which might be effected with little difficulty, he would then pronounce the creed of the true faith, enroll among the servants of the King, and remit annually a tribute to the treasury, as well as assist in reducing those *rajas* who might fail hereafter in their duty and allegiance.

'M. replied that he heard the road to the Ray's country was woody, and full of difficult passes. To which Shirka answered that, while there was a guide with the army so faith-

ful and capable as himself, not a single soul should receive injury. Accordingly, M. relying on the promises of the Raja in the year 858, began his expedition against Khelna, but was deserted in the outset by the Deccany and Abyssinian officers and troops who declined entering the woods. Raja Shirka agreeably to his promise, during the first two days conducted the army along a broad road, so that the general praised his zeal and fidelity; but on the third day he led them by paths so intricate that the male tiger, from apprehension, might change his sex; and through passes more fortuitous than the curly locks of the fair, more difficult to escape from than the mazes of love. Demons even might start at the precipices and caverns in those wilds, and ghosts might be panic-struck at the awful view of the mountains. Here the sun never enlivened with his splendour the valleys; nor had providence designed that it should penetrate their depths. The very grass was tough and sharp as the fangs of serpents, and the air fetid as the breath of dragons. Death dwelt in the waters and poison impregnated the breeze. After winding, weary and alarmed, through these dreadful labyrinths, the army entered a darker forest a passage through which was difficult even to the winds of heaven. It was bounded on three sides by mountains whose heads towered above the clouds, and on the other side was an inlet of the sea so that there was no path by which to advance, nor road for retreat but by which they had entered.

'M. at this crisis fell ill of a bloody flux so that he could not attend to the regularity of the line of march or give orders for the disposition of his troops who, being excessively fatigued, about nightfall flung themselves to rest wherever they could find room, for there was no spot which admitted of two tents being pitched near each other. While the troops were thus scattered in disorder, Shirka, their treacherous guide, left them and communicated to Shunkur Ray that he had lured the game into his toils. The Ray, with a great force conducted by Shirka, about midnight attacked the Mussulmans from all quarters, who unsuspicious of surprise were buried in the sleep produced by excessive exertions. In this helpless state, nearly 7000 soldiers of the faithful were put to death like sheep, with knives and daggers; the wind blowing violently, the rustling

of the trees prevented the troops from hearing the cries of their fellow-sufferers. Among these was Mullik-oot-Toojar who fell with 500 noble Syuds of Medina, Kurbulla and Nujuf, as also some Deccany and Abyssinian officers, together with about 2000 of their adherents who had remained with their general. Before daylight, the Ray having completed his bloody work retired with his people from the forest.'

The struggle for Maratha independence begun by the Shirkes, in the manner described above, was not taken up by other Marathas immediately. For the time being it ended as a heroic episode. But in western Maharashtra and Konkan there were many hard nuts to crack, and ultimately the Muslim powers were baffled by the intrepid Mavales of these regions. It took a couple of centuries before the land could produce a Shivaji. Meanwhile the Muslims had their complete innings and the Marathas had to serve out their full tutelage.

During the satanic rule of Humayun (1458-61) not only the Hindus, but even his Muslim subjects got disgusted. He was a sadist and constant shedder of human blood, fit to rank with the Hindu Harsa of Kashmir or Caligula and Nero of Rome. When he died, the poet Nasir composed this fitting chronogram :

> Humayun Shah has passed away from the world.
> God Almighty, what a blessing was the death of
> Humayun !
> On the date of his death the world was full of delight.
> So "Delight of the World" gives the date of his death.

Two minors—Ahmad III and Muhammad III—sat on the throne in three years (1461-63) under the regency of the Dowager-queen, Makhdumah-i-Jahan. The enemies of the Bahmanis took full advantage of the situation and invaded their territories. The worst of them was Mahmud Khalji of Malwa wbo advanced as far as Bidar and ravaged the country all around the capital. The houses of the nobles as well as of the common people were plundered and destroyed. But the queen-regent was a valiant lady. She drove away the invader with the help of the King of Gujarat, and also won great popularity for herself by releasing all the prisoners capriciously imprisoned by her son Nizam-u'd-Din Ahmad.

Khwaja Jahan Mahmud Gawan was her coadjutor and successor to power in the Bahmani Kingdom.

Despite his undoubted greatness in other ways, Mahmud, like most of his contemporaries, was an uncompromising bigot. So far as the Hindu subjects were concerned, therefore, the efficiency of his administration only resulted in making Muslim tyranny more efficiently tyrannical. He was also an imperialist. He 'increased the Bahmani dominions to an extent never reached before'. One of the tasks to which he addressed himself was to rehabilitate the prestige of the Sultans shattered in western Maharashtra by the disastrous Khelna expedition of Malik-u't-Tujjar.

The Maratha Rajas of Khelna and Sangameshvar, emboldened by their recent triumph, had continued their rebellious activities. They particularly meddled with the sea-trade making common cause with the pirates of the west coast. The Raya of Sangameshvar alone, according to Gawan, sent 130 ships to rob the Mecca pilgrims annually, and 'many thousands of Muslims were sacrificed at the altar of the greed of these people'. He, therefore, organised a grand campaign in order to permanently subjugate the southern and western parts of the country. It was to be a three-pronged thrust: (i) towards Bagalkot and Hubli under the Sultan in person; (ii) towards Belgaum under Yusuf 'Adil Shah; and (iii) in the Konkan under Gawan himself. Though ultimately all of them were successful, the last one proved the most hazardous.

It is to be remembered that in 1436 Sultan 'Ala-u'd-Din had sent Dilawar Khan with an army 'to reduce the tract of country along the sea-shore called Concan inhabited by a hardy race of men' (Firishta); that Dilawar succeeded in reducing the Rajas of 'Rairee and Sonkehr' to submission; and further that the Khan 'secured the beautiful daughter of the latter Raja for the King'. Though the officer was suspected of having 'received bribes from the Rajas of Concan and had not done his utmost to reduce their fortresses', 'Ala-u'd-Din was 'charmed with the Raja's daughter, who was without equal in beauty, disposition and knowledge of music'. However, no effective results followed, and the Rajas continued to harass travellers, both on land and sea, and 'constructed the strongest defences imaginable'. The merchants were afraid of

taking their wares out, and there was a big drop in the commerce of the Kingdom.

Early in 1469 (874 H.) Mahmud Gawan marched to Kolhapur and made that his H. Q. during his campaign against the recalcitrant infidels of the west country. He summoned to his assistance troops from Junnar, Chakan, Kolhar, Dabhol, Chaul, Wai and Man. 'Shunkur Ray of Khelna constantly maintained a fleet of 300 vessels,' writes Firishta, 'and interrupted the traffic of the Mahomedans. Upon the report of Khwaja M. Gawan's approach, the infidels contracted defensive alliances with each other, and assembled in great numbers at the head of the passes; but M. Gawan by degrees forced all their positions. Finding his cavalry useless in the mountainous country, he sent back the horse he had brought from the capital, and contented himself with the troops under Asud Khan Geelany, with the Joonere division, and his own dependents under Khoosh Kuddum, with the troops from Kolhar and Dabul. With his army he made his way by means of fire and the axe through the woods. He lay five months before the fort of Khelna without reducing it; and the rains setting in, compelled him to relinquish the siege. Committing the passes to the protection of 10,000 infantry inured to the climate, and on whom he could depend, he ascended the mountains and constructed thatched huts to pass the wet season in the district of Kolhapur, where he captured the fort of Ramgur. After the rainy season, he again descended the passes, and by stratagems and gifts of money, obtained possession of the fortress of Khelna, which had never till then been in the hands of the Mussulmans.'

Gawan returned to the capital only after an arduous campaign lasting three years. So great a strain had this put upon him that Firishta says : 'M. Gawan retiring to his chamber, disrobed himself of his splendid dress, threw himself on the ground, and wept plenteously; after which he came out, put on the habit of a *dervish*, and calling together all the most deserving holy and learned men, and Syuds of Ahmudabad, Bidur, distributed among them most of his money, jewels, and other wealth, reserving only his elephants, horses, and library; saying, "Praise be to God, I have escaped temptation and am now free from dangers".

After Gawan came the deluge. The Bahmani empire split up into the pentarchy of 'Imadshahi,'Adilshahi, Nizamshahi, Qutbshahi and Baridshahi. There were in all fourteen rulers who reigned during 180 years. Avoiding the extremes of both eulogy and deprecation such as that of Meadows Taylor and Vincent Smith, and also bearing in mind the general standards of that age, it is still difficult to feel enthusiastic over the total performance of the Bahmani Kings. Confining our attention to their Hindu subjects whose condition is relevant to our theme, it is futile to deny that they were shabbily treated, though they might have shared a moiety of the good things of life during the fitful periods of prosperity as residuary legatees.

Athanasius Nikitin, a Russian merchant, sojourned in the Kingdom from 1470–74. His impartial observations are worthy of attention: 'The land is overstocked with people', he writes; 'but those in the country are very miserable, while the nobles are extremely opulent and delight in luxury.' It is not difficult to distinguish between the opulent classes and the indigent masses; the former were mostly composed of the ruling Muslim nobles, and the latter largely comprised the conquered Hindu subjects. The wealth of the rich was derived from the peaceful toils of the peasants, and the spoils of war, supplemented by the profits of such trade as then existed. But war was the most paying industry, especially when it was the enemies' countries that were more frequently devastated. Under the Bahmani Sultans most of the fighting was done on foreign soil. While, therefore, the 'overstocked' population supplied the man-power for the armies, those who survived the slaughter, or rather their masters, were enriched beyond the dreams of avarice. How this wealth was expended might be gathered from the following description by Nikitin.

He found the Khorassanian 'Boyar' Melik Tuchar, merchant prince, keeping an army of 4,00,000 men; Melik Khan, 1,00,000; Kharat Khan, 20,000, and many other Khans keeping an army of 10,000 men. The Sultan went out with 3,00,000 men of his own. 'They are wont to be carried on their beds (*palkis*), preceded by some twenty chargers caparisoned in gold, and followed by 300 men on horseback, and

by 500 on foot, and by horn-men, 10 torchbearers and 10 musicians. The Sultan goes out hunting, with his mother and his lady, and a train of 10,000 men on horseback, 50,000 on foot; 200 elephants adorned in gilded armour, and in front 100 horsemen, 100 dancers, and 300 common horses in golden clothing; 100 monkeys, and 100 concubines, all foreign.'

It has ever been the lot of conquered peoples to support the burdens of such gilded prosperity. But what galled the 'infidels' most was not the shocking contrast between the wealth of the rich and the poverty of the poor, but the religious intolerance of their fanatical rulers. Consequently, the first spontaneous reactions of the oppressed masses were neither in the political nor in the economic field but in the religious. We shall deal with these consequences in a later chapter. Here we must complete the story of Muslim rule under the minor dynasties which arose out of the ruins of the Bahmani Kingdom.

Of the five kingdoms referred to before, the 'Imadshahi was absorbed by Ahmadnagar in 1574, and the Baridshahi by Bijapur in 1609. Thus the Nizamshahi of Ahmadnagar, the Adilshahi of Bijapur, and the Qutbshahi of Golkonda alone played roles of any consequence in the seventeenth century. Of these three, the first was extinguished in 1636, the second in 1686, and the last in 1687. The Nizamshahi existed for 146 years, the Adilshahi for 197 years, and the Qutbshahi for 169 years. Together they ruled over most of Maharashtra, a part of Andhra and a portion of Karnatak. Besides these there was the Faruqi kingdom of Khandesh (1388-1601) in the Tapti valley with its key fortress of Asirgarh and its capital city of Burhanpur which became the Mughal base of operations in the Deccan during the seventeenth century. But from the point of view of Maratha history, the Nizamshahi and the Adilshahi must engage most of our immediate attention.

The founder of the Nizamshahi was Malik Ahmed Bahri, son of Nizam-u'l-Mulk who led the Deccani Muslims against the foreigners in the quarrels which culminated in the assassination of Mahmud Gawan (1481). Within a decade of this event three new kingdoms came into existence in quick

succession: the 'Imadshahi in 1484, the 'Adilshahi in 1489, and the Nizamshahi in 1490. The Qutbshahi followed in 1518, and the Baridshahi in 1526. Malik Ahmed was governor of Junnar when he rebelled against his Bahmani sovereign. His position was considerably strengthened by his capture of Daulatabad in 1499. His successor, Burhan Nizamshah ruled for forty-five years (1508–53) playing an important part in the Deccan politics. In 1550 he allied himself with the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar against his co-religionist Adilshahi. Eight years later a reversal of alliances was brought about by the Bijapur ruler who invaded the Nizamshahi territory along with the Vijayanagar forces. This proved a fateful invasion. The Hindus under Rama Raya of Vijayanagar enacted such barbarities in the Ahmadnagar kingdom that they provoked savage repercussions. Indeed, to cut a long story short, these brutalities drove the Muslim powers to form a strong confederacy, under the leadership of Bijapur, for the destruction of Vijayanagar.

In December 1564 the confederates met near Talikota (25 miles n. of the Krishna river), now in Bijapur District. On Tuesday, 23 January 1565 (*20 Jum* ii 972 H.) battle was joined with the Vijayanagar army in the village of Bayapur or Bhogapur (better known as Rakkastangadi). The result is too well known to need dilation. That historic battle ranks with Tarain (1192), Khanua (1527), Haldighati (1576), and Panipat (1761), in the annals of Hindu India. Each one of these engagements proved a sanguinary triumph for Muslim arms with far-reaching consequences.

Husain Nizamshah of Ahmadnagar and 'Ali Adilshah of Bijapur, commanded, respectively, the centre and the right wing of the Muslim army. The left wing was led by Ibrahim Qutbshah of Golkonda. The conquerors shared the dominions though not the traditions, of the defeated Vijayanagar kingdom. The great Hindu empire of the South which had lasted for more than two centuries, as V. A. Smith has observed, was finally ended, and the supremacy of Islam in the Deccan was assured.

Ahmadnagar continued to flourish for sixty years more (1565–1626), especially under the vigorous leadership of Chand Bibi and Malik 'Ambar. Husain Nizamshah was succeeded by

Murtaza (1565-86). During the new regime Berar was annexed to the Nizamshahi territories (1574); but little else worthy of notice took place. On the other hand, the period following was marked by faction fights, futile wars and weak successors on the throne. Consequently, Ahmadnagar fell a prey to ambitious aggressors from the North and the South. Chand Bibi and Malik 'Ambar, no doubt, heroically struggled against the external enemies and pulled up the State from within to the level of a precarious prosperity; but they were soon overwhelmed by the external enemies. Partners in great victories have seldom continued to live in amity: Ahmadnagar and Bijapur were no exceptions. Their quarrels encouraged the Mughal emperors to push forward their imperial designs in the Deccan, thereby endangering the liberty of all. Burhanpur and Ahmadnagar were occupied by the imperialists in 1600; Asirgarh was taken by them in 1601. Malik 'Ambar continued to fight valiantly against them for another quarter of a century. But neither his courage nor patriotism nor resourcefulness availed anything (as we shall witness in the next chapter), in the face of Bijapur and the Mughals. To anticipate that history a little, the fall of the Nizamshahi was precipitated by the unholy alliance between the Adilshah and the Mughal Emperor. The terms of the compact between them might be quoted here without comment; for they speak for themselves.

(i) The 'Adilshah was to acknowledge the overlordship of the Mughal Emperor and promise to obey his orders in future.

(ii) The pretensions of Nizamshahi were to be noted and all its territories to be divided between the Emperor and the King of Bijapur.

(iii) The latter was to retain all his ancestral dominions with the following additions :—From the Ahmadnagar kingdom in the west, the Sholapur and Wangi *Mahals*, between the Bhima and ths Sina rivers, including the forts of Sholapur and Parenda; in the N.E., the *parganas* of Bhalki and Chidgupa, and that portion of the Konkan which belonged to the Nizamshah, including Poona and Chakan districts.

These acquisitions comprised 59 *parganas* and yielded a revenue of 20 *lakhs* of *hons* or nearly 80 *lakhs* of rupees. The

rest of the Nizamshahi territory was to be annexed to the Mughal Empire "beyond question or doubt." The *parganas* specified above and the hinterland between the Mughal and Bijapur dominions constituted the heart of Maharashtra. This was the cradle of a historic movement that was presently to arise and shake the foundations of Muslim dominions alike in the Deccan and the North.

Bahmani history repeated itself in the 'Adilshahi no less than the Nizamshahi. The 'Adilshahi kingdom of Bijapur, founded in 1489, by Yusuf 'Adil Shah, ran its uneven course until its extinction at the hands of Aurangzeb in 1686. Its greatest achievement in the cause of Islamic rule was the overthrow of Vijayanagar in 1565 followed by the annexation of its provinces in the South thereafter. Firishta has discribed Yusuf as 'a wise prince, intimately acquainted with human nature,' handsome, eloquent, well read, and a skilled musician. 'Although he mingled pleasure with business, yet he never allowed the former to interfere with the latter. He always warned his ministers to act with justice and integrity, and in his own person showed them an example of attention to those virtues. He invited to his court many learned men and valiant officers from Persia, Turkistan, and Rum; also several eminent artists who lived happily under the shadow of his bounty. In his reign the citadel of Bijapur was built of stone.'

An illuminating incident is also narrated by Firishta: 'When Yoosoof Adil Khan first established his independence, he heard that one Mookund Row Marhatta and his brother, who had both been officers under the Bahmuny government, had with a number of peasants fled and taken up a strong position among the hills with the determination of opposing his authority: he accordingly marched against them at the head of 2,000 cavalry and 5,000 infantry: they were defeated and their families fell into the hands of the King. Among these was the sister of Mookund Row, whom Yoosoof afterwards espoused, and gave her the title of Booboojee Khanum. By this lady he had three daughters and one son, Ismael, who succeeded to the throne. Of the three daughters, Muryum, the eldest, married Burhan Nizam Shah Bheiry of Ahmudnuggur: Khoodeija, the second, married Ala-ood-Deen Imad-

ool-Moolk, King of Gavul and Berar, and Beeby Musseety, the third, married Ahmud Shah Bahmuny at Goolburga, as has been related.'

This story is interesting as revealing Yusuf's intimacy with the Hindus. Vincent Smith says that he freely admitted Hindus to offices of trust; the Marathi language was ordinarily used for purposes of accounts and business. Marriage with a Hindu woman captured in war may not, however, be construed as anything more than attraction towards a member of the opposite sex rather than of the opposing sect. Yet, it is well to remember that the lady became the mother of one Muslim ruler and the mother-in-law of three others. It is also significant to observe that the unidentified Mukund Rao, together with his unnamed brother, was carrying forward the tradition of the Shirkes, fighting valiantly with the help of a 'peasant' army and taking advantage of the mountainous character of their country. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that the Muslim rulers found it expedient to tame these turbulent Marathas under the yoke of civil and military service. 'It must always be remembered,' writes Gribble, 'that the Mahomedan conquests, not only in the Deccan but also throughout India, were the conquests of a foreign army of the forts and strongholds. The country itself was left untouched, and the fort once taken, it was either razed like Vijayanagar, or a garrison being left there, the army marched on. The Hindoo ryots were left to till their fields as before, and the only difference to them was that they paid their land-tax to a Mahomedan instead of a Hindoo landlord. The artisans and merchants still plied their crafts as formerly; it was only the members of the royal families who retreated before the conquerors. A large number of the landed proprietors were also allowed to remain, with authority to collect the revenue, on condition, however, that they paid a fixed rent to the Government. Over each small district was placed a Mahomedan governor who was supported by a small body of troops with which he kept order. There was no occupation of the country by the Mahomedans and no settlement of the conquerors in the rural parts. The Hindoo population remained a nation as separate and as apart as it had been when they were ruled by their own countrymen.

Their customs and their religious rites remained the same. When the wave of war swept over their villages, then temples and shrines were desecrated, in those places which had not been visited by the foreign army, the old structures still remained and, during times of peace, they were not molested. Some of these Hindoo Zamindars proved faithful servants and brought with them their own retainers to serve in the Mahomedan armies. In this way the constitution of the Mahomedan armies of the Deccan underwent a gradual change. Whether it was owing to constant feud between the foreign and the Deccanee Mahomedans, or whether foreigners found greater attractions in the armies of the great Delhi Emperors, cannot now be said, but it seems certain that there was no longer the same quantity of volunteer adventurers from foreign parts from whom to recruit the Deccan armies. It therefore became the custom to recruit the ranks largely from among the Hindoo warlike tribes—the Beydars, Mahrattas and Rajputs. The chief commands were bestowed upon Mahomedans, and there were also special regiments composed exclusively of Mahomedans amongst whom were also Arabs and Abyssinians. The armies, however, were very largely made up of Hindoos, and not only did this cause a change in their system of warfare, but it led eventually to a weakening of the army itself.'

The Marathas or Bargirs, he goes on to point out, especially distinguished themselves as irregular cavalry and were largely employed in the hilly country ending in the Western Ghats. 'Mahomedans at no period seem to have had any partiality for hills and jungles. When they received a jaghir (or estate) they preferred that it should be in the plains, if possible, not far from the capital. Even then, they seldom resided in their country seats, except occasionally for hunting or purposes of sport. They preferred the vicinity of the Courts with all their intrigues and luxury. They, therefore, left the wilder portions of the Deccan in the hands of these Hindoo chieftains, stipulating only that each Zamindar should bring a certain number of retainers into the field. *In this way there gradually grew up a hardy race of mountaineers, always the best stuff for soldiers, who, brought up in their own faith and traditions, were yet taught the art of war by their*

conquerors, and only awaited a time of danger and of weakness to raise the standard of revolt, and assert their own independence. This was, in fact, the origin of the Mahratta nation, and the Sultans of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar may be said to have educated and brought into existence the nation which, before long, was to take, not only their places, but very nearly to acquire the sovereignty of India.'

It is difficult to improve upon this description of the conditions in which the Marathas found their great opportunities. All over Maharashtra today there are families in whose veins runs the blood of their ancestors who exploited this situation to their fullest advantage. Most of them have preserved traditions, partly oral and partly written, which when sifted and verified would provide rich material for their grand national *saga.* These sources of Maratha history ought not to be contemptuously dismissed as worthless fabrications or 'gossiping *Bakhars* and gasconading *Tawarikhas.*' For our present period they consitute an invaluable source. Even where some of the details might appear to be of doubtful authenticity, the tradition as a whole is borne out by the test of cross-references and mutual corroborations. They are, besides, so interwoven with place-names, institutions and practices which have continued in after ages, that little doubt might be cast upon their essential veracity. Minus a few mythical touches and interpolations calculated to foster family pride, they provide a wealth of valuable information which remains to be fully utilised. They certainly give us a full picture in tone and colour of the formative period of Maratha history, which must not be ignored or neglected.

Under the Deccan Sultans, the country was divided into *Tarafs* or *Sarkars*, subdivided into *parganas* or *prants*, which in their turn were made up of units, the smallest of which was a village. The revenue was farmed out in small portions and collected mostly through Hindu agents. There were *Amils* or government officers to regulate the police work and decide civil suits. These last were generally referred to the *Panchayats.* Over the *Amils* was a *Muqasadar* or *Amaldar* (who was not always a Mahomedan); and above the latter a *Suba*: 'He did not reside constantly in the districts, and took no share in the revenue management,

although deeds and formal writings of importance were made out in his name.'

The military organisation was feudal in character. The hill-forts were generally garrisoned by the Marathas under the *Desmukhs* and *Jagirdars*. A few places of great importance were reserved by the King, by whom the *qile'dars* and governors were appointed. Rank depended upon the number of retainers and horses maintained for which a *jagir* was generally assigned. Grant Duff observes, 'the quota of troops so furnished was very small in proportion to the size of the jagheer. Phultun Desh, for which in the time of the Mahratta Peishwas 350 horse were required, only furnish 50 to the Beejapoor government, at a very late period of that dynasty; but the Mahratta chiefs could procure horse at a short notice, and they were entertained or discharged at pleasure : a great convenience to a wasteful Court and an improvident government. The allegiance of the Hindoo *sardars* was secured by the conferment of titles like Naik, Raja and Rao, which invariably carried with it the means of supporting the new rank. Often the Mahratta proved recalcitrant and even dangerous; but they were seldom united. They fought with rancour wherever individual disputes or hereditary feuds existed; and that spirit of rivalry, which was fomented by the Kings of the Bahmanne dynasty, was one means of keeping the Mahrattas poised against each other in the dynasties which succeeded them.'

Ranade has pointed out that Brahman *Deshpandes* and Maratha *Deshmukhs* or *Desais* were in charge of district collections, and the names of Didopant, Narso Kale, and Yesu Pandit were distinguished for the great reforms they introduced in the Bijapur revenue administration. Brahman ambassadors were employed by the Ahmadnagar kings at the Courts of Gujarat and Malwa; and Kamalsen, a Brahman *Peshva* held great powar under the first Burhanshah. Yesu Pandit was *Mustapha* in the Bijapur kingdom at the same time.

One of the earliest Maratha families to carve out a place for themselves was that of the Nimbalkars of Phaltan. Its scions still rule over their historic principality. Their family traditions stretch back to the days of Muhammad

Tughlaq, and recount the distinguished part played by the Nimbalkars under successive dynasties. One Nimba Raj appears to have obtained the title of Naik from M. Tughlaq together with a *jagir* worth three and a half *lakhs*. His son, Wananga-bhupal, distinguished himself under the Bahmanis, and he married Jaivantabai, daughter of Kamraj Ghate, who was a great *mansabdar*. Under the 'Adilshahi, a Nimbalkar was made *Sardeshmukh* of Phaltan, according to Grant-Duff, before the middle of the seventeenth century, 'as appears by original *sunuds* of that date'. He also adds, that Wungojee Naik, better known by the title of Jugpal, who lived in the early part of that century 'was notorious for his restless and predatory habits'. A sister of this Jugpal was the grandmother of Shivaji the Great (i.e. wife of Maloji Bhosle).

Shahji, father of Shivaji, got a good footing because of his relations with the Nimbalkars on the one side (in the Adilshahi) and with the Jadhavs on the other (in the Nizamshahi). The *jagirs* of these important Maratha families, stretching athwart the country, and occupying contiguous lands, formed an *imperium in imperio* on account of the *de facto* power they wielded.

Another such family was that of the Mores who were 'originally Naiks in the Carnatic.' One of them had risen to be a commander of 12,000 infantry. Yusuf 'Adil Shah employed him in the reduction of the wild tract between the Nira and Warana rivers. In this enterprise More was successful, and he dispossessed the Shirkes and their allies, the Guzars, the Mohites, the Mahadiks, etc. For this great service the title of Chandra Rao was conferred upon More. His son Yeshwant Rao, likewise, distinguished himself in a battle against Burhan Nizamshah, near Parenda, and captured his green flag. He was consequently allowed to use that trophy as his standard, and succeeded his father, as Raja of Javli. 'Their posterity used the same tract of country for seven generations, and by their mild and useful administration that inhospitable region became extremely populous.'

The Ghatges of Khatav Desh were separated from the Nimbalkars by the Mahadev Hills. They were *Deshmukhs* of Man under Bahmani rule; but the title of *Sardeshmukh* was conferred upon Nagoji Rao Ghatge by Ibrahim Adilshah in

1626, together with the honorific *Junjar Rao*. The Manes were *Deshmukhs* of Mhasvad in Man taluka (51 miles e. of Satara). They too were distinguished *Shiledars* under Bijapur government, 'but nearly as notorious for their revengeful character as the Shirkes.' The Dafles of Jath (Bijapur District) were hereditary *Patils* of Daflapur; and the Savants of Wadi (near Goa) were *Deshmukhs* who got the title of Bahadur from the Adilshah for service against the Portuguese. 'It is remarkable of their territory,' writes Grant Duff, ' that the ancient appellation of the family is preserved in our modern maps. They were distinguished as commanders of infantry, a service best adopted to the country which they inhabited.'

The Savants were Bhosles like the *Deshmukhs* of Mudhol and Kapsi, near the Warana and Ghataprabha rivers respectively. All these Marathas traced their origin from North Indian Kshatriyas or Rajputs : the Nimbalkars were Pawars or Paramars, and the Dafles, Chauhans; the Jadhavs of Sindkhed were Yadavs, and the Bhosles, Shisodiyas. The story of the migration of junior members of the Kshatriya ruling families of the north runs in the family traditions of several chieftains of the Deccan and the South. According to Rudrakavi's *Rashtraudha-Vamsha Mahakavya* (1596 A.D.) the founder of the Bagul principality of Mayurgiri (Nasik District) belonged to the Rathod family, and originally came from Kanauj. Minus its poetic and mythological touches, several of the historical facts mentioned by the poet are corroborated by other evidence. A few incidents are worthy of notice here.

Baglan (country of the Baguls) came under Muslim domination after the fall of the Yadavas of Devgiri. The *Tarikhi-Firuzshahi* states that (c. 1340) the mountains of Salher and Mulher were held by a chief named Mandev (a mistake for Nanadev of the Bagul family). The Mayurgiri kingdom appears to have been founded at the commencement of the fourteenth century. But it was compelled into submission successively by the Muslim rulers of Bidar, Khandesh and Gujarat. In 1429, during the Bahmani-Gujarat war, the Bagul territory was overrun and devastated by Ahmed Shah I (Bahmani). Seventy years later we find that the Baguls were tributaries to Ahmadnagar. Next in 1539, Bahadur Shah

of Gujarat subjugated them. Finally, when Akbar conquered Khandesh (1599), they had to submit to the Mughals.

The *A'in-i-Akbari* refers to the Rathod chief of the mountainous region between Surat and Nandurbar, who commanded 8,000 horse and 5,000 infantry. He owned seven forts, two of which (Shalher and Mulher) were places of unusual strength. Owing to its abundance of grain, fodder and water Baglan was able to resist Akbar during a prolonged siege of seven years. 'As the passes were most strongly fortified, and so narrow that not more than two men could march abreast, Akbar was in the end obliged to compound with the chief, giving him Nizampur, Daita, and Badur, with several other villages. In return Pratapshah agreed to take care of merchants passing through his territory, to send presents to the Emperor, and to leave one of his sons as a pledge at Burhanpur. Jahangir in his *Memoirs* writes: 'He (i.e. Pratapshah) had about 1,500 horse in his pay, and in time of need could bring into the field 3,000 horse....The aforesaid Raja does not drop the thread of caution and prudence in dealing with the rulers of Gujarat, the Deccan, and Khandesh. He has never gone himself to see any of them, and if any of them has wished to stretch out his hand to possess his kingdom, he has remained undisturbed through the support of the others. After the province of Gujarat, the Deccan and Khandesh came into possession of the late king (Akbar), Bharjiv (Pratipshah) came to Burhanpur and he had the honour of kissing his feet; and, after being enrolled among his servants, was raised to the *mansab* of 3,000.'

The Bhosles were destined to play by far the most important role in shaping the history of the future. Like the founder of the Bagul dynasty, the Sisodiya ancestor of Shivaji appears to have come into the Deccan about the time the Bahmani kingdom was established. According to the documents in the possession of the Bhosle (Ghorpade) rulers of Mudhol, two brothers, Sajjan Sinh and Kshem Sinh,—sons of Ajay Sinh, son of Lakshman Sinh of Chitor (kinsman of Ratna Sinh, the husband of the famous Padmini of 'Ala-u'd-Din Khalji's adventure of 1303)—being disinherited by their father, came into the Deccan as soldiers of fortune. Sajjan and his son Dilip were granted a *jagir* by 'Ala-u'd-Din Hasanshah Bah-

mani in recognition of their gallant services, at Mirat near Daulatabad. The *farman* relating to this (dated November 1352), still preserved at Mudhol, reads: 'Being pleased with the valiant deeds displayed on the battle-field by Rana Dilip Sinh, *Sardar-i-Khaskhel*, the son of Sajjan Sinh and grandson of Ajay Sinh, ten villages in Mirat (Taraf Devgarh) are granted to him for the maintenance of his family. So, in accordance with his wishes, they should be given over to him. *Ramazan*, 753 H.'

Firishta says that 'Suddoo' (Sidoji, son of Dilip) was awarded the title of 'Meer Nobat' for his great exploits. His son Bhairoji or Bhimaji obtained Mudhol, along with 84 adjoining villages, in 800 H. (1398), from Firuz Shah Bahmani. In the *farman* Sidoji is referred to as Thanedar of Sagar who 'sacrificed himself in the thick of the fight.' Bhairoji who 'fought shoulder to shoulder with his father against our enemies, and showed great courage and ability, attracted our royal attention as deserving of favours. So in recognition of these qualities....Mudhol and the adjoining 84 villages (Taraf Raibag) have been granted as a mark of royal favour to Bhairavsinhji. So he should take possession of this jagir and enjoy it from generation to generation and render diligent and loyal service in the cause of our Empire. 25 *Rabi-u'l-ākhar*, 800 H.' (15 January 1398).

Another document speaks of the services of Ugrasen 'in the battle against the Raja of Vijayanagar'; and adds, 'In the same manner, from the beginning of this Kingdom, the ancestors of his family have faithfully sacrificed their lives in the service of our Sovereignty. Hence, the cherishing and sustaining of this family is incumbent on us'. This *farman* (dated 8 *Shawwal* 827 H. or 3 September 1424) links up the Mudhol and Mirat *jagirs* (with Pathri) 'given from old days'.....to continue in the possession of Ugrasen, 'so that he may serve us with satisfaction'. To these territories the *pargana* of Wai was added in 1454, by 'Ala-u'd-Din II for service during the campaign against the Shirkes of Khelna.

Shubhakrishna, a younger son of this Ugrasen, together with his paternal uncle, Pratap Sinh, left Mudhol on account of a family dispute, and settled on the Mirat *jagir*, about 1460. Thenceforward the two sections of the Bhosles developed

along divergent lines. Muhammad Shah Bahmani's *farman* (of 7 *Jumadi-u'l-Awwal*, 876 or 22 October 1471) explains the circumstances in which the Mudhol family acquired its more popular name of Ghorpade; in it the final capture of Khelna is attributed to Krishna Sinh and Bhim Sinh of this family. Successive *Farmans* of the 'Adilshahs bear witness to the continued loyalty of the Ghorpades to their Muslim masters. But the northern branch of the Bhosles, descended from Subhakrishna, though serving under the Nizamshahi rulers, struck out for greater independence. Shahji and Shivaji belonged to the Mirat branch. In this line were born Maloji and his brother Vithoji. They were originally *Patils* of Verul (Ellora near Daulatabad), under Lukhji Jadhav Rao, who was *Deshmukh* of Sindkhed (Nizamshahi). Maloji married Umabai, a sister of Vangoji Naik Nimbalkar of Phaltan. Their son, Shahji was married to Jijabai, daughter of Lukhji Jadhav Rao. She became the mother of the famous Shivaji. When Maloji died fighting at the battle of Indapur, in 1606, he left behind him as family *jagir*, Ellora, Dheradi, Kannrad, several villages in the Jafrabad, Daulatabad and Ahmadabad (Nizamshahi) districts, besides the management of the Poona estate. He had already acquired the status of a *mansabdar* of 5000 horse before the historic marriage of Shahji and Jijabai. The exploits of Shahji will be dealt with in the next chapter. But the ground had been already prepared for him in the manner described by us above.

CHAPTER V

THE PIONEERS

> 'We Rajputs have served from old till now under several kings; we have never before served nor shall we do so in future under dishonour and displeasure. We shall not further put up with unfair treatment.'—Shahji to Adil Shah.

During the seventeenth century, when the Mughal Empire was in the plenitude of its power and prosperity, the Southern States were in a crumbling condition. Already a century had elapsed since the dissolution of the Bahmani Kingdom, and Vijayanagar was more a memory than a political entity to reckon with. While the Nizamshahi was tottering to its fall, Golkonda and Bijapur were emitting a last fitful glow before their extinction. Both the Deccan and the peninsula further south, therefore, offered a tempting field to adventurous spirits whether they were of local or foreign origin. Our concern in this chapter is to trace the doings of some of these adventurers who ultimately proved themselves the creators of a new order.

At the outset, it is helpful to bear in mind that the century opened with the death of Akbar (1605), in North India, and closed with the death of Aurangzeb (1707) in the Deccan. These two titans, each ruling for half-a-century, enclosed between their reigns an epoch of grandeur and power such as had rarely been witnessed in India since the days of the imperial Mauryas and Guptas. The best period of Muslim rule in the Deccan was certainly over; and further south, the vanishing shadow of Vijayanagar brooded over a congeries of warring chieftains, rather than States, who had up till recently been its subordinates or feudatories. Golkonda and Bijapur were like two lizards trying to lick in these political ephemera, while the imperial cat was already at their back about to swallow them. The Marathas stepped in at this juncture, and by a combination of the 'mountain-rats' per-

formed the miracle of saving themselves from the feline danger. Shahji Bhosle, father of Shivaji, occupies a position of great promise among the pioneers of the Maratha movement for the liberation of their country from the domination of Islamic powers.

Personality has ever played a prominent part in politics; and though our chief aim is historical rather than biographical, we have necessarily to note a few landmarks in the careers of the early makers of Maratha history. Shahji was born on 15 March 1594 and married Jijabai, daughter of Lukhji Jadhav Rao, in 1605. His second marriage took place about 1625, with Tukabai Mohite at Bijapur. These details are of importance on account of their political consequences. Shivaji was born of the former wife and Vyankoji of the latter. Both became founders of States whose history we are to trace in later chapters. Besides, the two marriages led to family feuds which were not without significance in shaping important events. One of the immediate results of the dispute which arose between the Bhosles and the Jadhavs was that Lukhji went over to the Mughal camp, while Shahji remained in the Nizamshahi to be one of its last defenders.

It is not to be supposed, however, that Shahji's service was disinterested; for he too was a fortune-hunter and changed sides as exigencies dictated. But his *bonafides* may not be questioned, relatively speaking. While his father-in-law went away in a huff and petulant pique, Shahji proved a more loyal supporter of the kingdom though not of every prince who sat on the Nizamshahi throne. The circumstances were such that no absolute consistency of conduct could be expected from anybody. Shahji was one among several soldiers of fortune. We should judge his actions in terms of the situations as they arose rather than by any absolute standards; more with a view to understand and elucidate than to praise or condemn. He could rise above many of his contemporaries, but not above his age. That transcendence was reserved for his gifted son Shivaji.

The Nizamshahi kingdom, founded by Malik Ahmed Bahri in 1490, was practically extinguished in 1633 when Husain Nizam Shah III was captured by the Mughals and sent a prisoner to Gwalior fort, after the fall of Daulatabad. But a

puppet prince was put up by Shahji, and lived as a fugitive, until the king-maker was compelled to surrender him at Mahuli three years later. The commencement of the public career of Shahji covers the momentous period of the last four decades of the ill-fated Nizamshahi State. His name first finds prominent mention among the Maratha officers who fought against the combined forces of the Mughals and the 'Adilshahi at Bhatvadi in defence of the Nizamshahi kingdom under its great leader Malik 'Ambar (Oct. 1624). His father-in-law, Lukhji Jadhav Rao, was in the opposite camp on this historic occasion. To appreciate its correct significance we must survey the situation in the Deccan from the commencement of the century.

Akbar had begun his policy of aggression into the Decean in 1593. The lack of harmony among the Muslim Sultans of the South, as well as their factious nobles, helped the Mughals in their imperial designs. Great heroism and patriotism were displayed in resisting their advance by Chand Bibi and Malik 'Ambar, but they proved of little avail in the end. Akbar occupied Burhanpur on 31 March 1600. Prince Daniyal and Khan-i-khanan captured Ahmednagar fort on 19 August the same year; while Asirgarh came into Mughal possession on 17 January 1601. It is related that Akbar then proclaimed himself Emperor of the Deccan. He also tried to establish a permanent link with the Muslim rulers of the South by securing an Adilshahi princess for his son Daniyal. But the prince died within a few months after his reluctant bride had joined him in 1604. Details of this incident are narrated by Firishta who personally escorted the unwilling princess to Paithan. The enforced marriage and its fatal result may be considered prophetic of the future consequences of the imperial 'courting of the Deccan bride.' Aurangzeb was to be the last Mughal Emperor to suffer from the fatal consequences of the forced political 'match-making'. For that imperial conqueror was also brought to his lethal bed in the Deccan, and the 'bride' survived to undo his Empire.

Like the captive 'Adilshahi princess the states of the Deccan were long struggling to escape from the imperial Mughal clutch. But Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkonda were successively over-powered. The pity of it, however, was

that while the first was being attacked, the others co-operated with the aggressor instead of joining in common defence against the common danger. Consequently, the removal of the Nizamshahi (1636) brought the Mughal menace to the very gates of Golkonda and Bijapur. The imperial share-out of the Nizamshahi territories, which we envisaged in the preceding chapter, proved but a deadly bait; though for the time-being the jealous neighbours of the extinguished kingdom gloated over their temporary gains. The heroic Chand Bibi died a martyr in this struggle, and the brave Abyssinian soldier-statesman, Malik 'Ambar, valiantly, though in vain, tried to defend his master's dominion during a full quarter-century. 'It is my design,' he declared to Ibrahim 'Adil Shah, 'to fight the Mughal troops so long as life remains in my body. It may be that through Your Majesty's ever increasing fortune, I shall expel the Mughals from the Deccan.' Ibrahim, however, proved unworthy of this noble trust and confidence. Ultimately he joined the Northern aggressor for the common ruination of all the Deccan States. The battle of Bhatvadi (Oct. 1624) was a shining episode in the gallant defence of the Ahmadnagar kingdom by Malik 'Ambar. It was a striking military triumph, won against the combined forces of Bijapur and the Mughals but barren of political results. The 'brave captain,' as Pietro della Valle calls him, died (in 1626), like Chand Bibi, extorting admiration even from his enemies. In the words of the *Iqbal-nama-i-Jahangiri* : 'In warfare, in command, in sound judgment, and in administration, he had no rival or equal. He well understood the predatory (kazzaki) warfare, which in the language of the Dakhni is called *Bargi-giri*. He kept down the turbulent spirits of that country, and maintained his exalted position to the end of his life, and closed his career in honour. History records no other instance of an Abyssinian slave arriving at such eminence.'

From the point of view of Maratha history, the greatest service that Malik 'Ambar rendered was the employment and training he afforded to the Marathas. He used them with such deadly effect that his enemies 'passed their days without repose and nights without sleep'. Prominent among the Marathas who fought on his side at Bhatvadi, as we have

stated before, were Shahji Bhosle, Vithalraj and his son Khenoji Bhosle, Mudhoji Nimbalkar of Phaltan, Hambir Rao Chuhan and Nagoji Rao Ghatge. On the opposite side were Lukhji Jadhav Rao, Uda Ram, and Vishvanath (in the Mughal camp), and Dhundiraj Brahmin, Ghate and several others (in the Bijapuri army). The observations of Dr. Beni Prasad, in this connexion, are worthy of citation: 'The Marathas entered the service and the courts of the Deecan monarchs. In the beginning of the seventeenth century they constituted a powerful factor at the Nizamshahi court of Ahmadnagar. The light Maratha horse formed valuable auxiliaries to the Deccan forces. Malik 'Amber fully realised their value against the Mughals ... From this point of view, the chief importance of the Deccan campaigns of the Mughals lies in the opportunities of military training and political power which they afforded to the Marathas. Malik 'Ambar as a great master of the art of guerilla warfare, as Shivaji himself, stands at the head of the builders of the Maratha nationality. His primary object was to serve the interest of his own master, but unconsciously he nourished into strength a power which more than revenged the injuries of the south on the northern power.'

Though Shahji was temporarily alienated, either by the hauteur of Malik 'Ambar or his lack of adequate recognition of the ambitious Maratha's services after Bhatvadi, and found welcome at Bijapur (between 1624-25), he was called back to the Nizamshahi when the able Abyssinian was no more. Shahji was of sufficient importance at that time for his services to be coveted by Bijapur. Malik 'Ambar had killed Mulla Muhammad Lari, the Bijapuri general after Bhatvadi, and followed up his victory by raiding the Adilshahi territories. The defection of Shahji from 'Amber, therefore, was a welcome relief to Bijapur. The Maratha captain was made *Sar Lashkar* by Ibrahim Shah and Karyat Talbid and Panhala were conferred upon his relations the Mohites. The exploits of Shahji during this period, such as his defeat of Mudhoji Phaltankar, are described in the *Siva-Bharat*. Though all his details may not be accepted as true, the serviceableness of Shahji to his new master might not be gainsaid. But the jealousy of the older 'Adilshahi servants

and the opportunity created by the death of Malik 'Ambar (14 May 1626) brought Shahji back into the Nizamshahi. It is also not unlikely that Murtaza II invited him, for the *jagirs* of Poona and Supa which Shahji had secured on his leaving Bijapur were reconfirmed by the Nizam Shah in May 1628. The circumstances were certainly all very tempting and favourable for a person of Shahji's calibre and ambitions.

The death of Ibrahim 'Adil Shah, on 12 September 1627, might have precipitated his action. Fath Khan (Malik Ambar's son), had, indeed, succeeded to his father's official position, but his character was not equal to his status as we shall presently see. The Emperor Jahangir also died, on 29 October 1627, leaving behind him a situation full of turmoil creating opportunities for the enemies of the Empire. Ever since the murder of prince Khusrau (22 Feb. 1621) by order of Khurram (Shah Jahan) at Burhanpur, troubles had been brewing thick within the Mughal dominions. Shah Khurram himself rebelled in 1623 and sought shelter in the Deccan. The imperial family itself was torn with dissensions : Nur Jahan wanting her son-in-law Shahriyar to succeed her husband to the throne; her brother Asaf Khan supporting the claims of his son-in-law, Khurram; and prince Parvez backed up by the powerful noble Mahabat Khan. The last named actually rebelled and took the royal couple captive a little before Jahangir's death in 1626. Finally, Dawar Baksh (the hapless son of the tragic Khusrau) was made a scapegoat to pave the way for Shah Jahan who ascended the imperial throne through crime and bloodshed. The new reign also opened ominously with the revolt of Khan Jahan Lodi, who following his master's precedent took refuge in the Deccan (1627-31).

Such was the atmosphere within the Mughal Empire when Shahji returned to the Nizamshahi kingdom. Things were not more settled at home. While Khan Jahan was seeking support from Murtaza Nizamshah (1629-30), Fath Khan was imprisoned by the machinations of Hamid Khan, a vile and unscrupulous fellow who rose to power through vice and corruption. In the face of the pursuing Mughal forces, a temporary alliance had been formed between Bijapur and Ahmadnagar in support of the rebel Khan Jahan who promised restoration of the Deccan territories conquered by the Mughals.

Being in league with the Lodi, even Lukhji Jadhav Rao had returned to the Nizamshahi. Bijapur was so well fortified, and the allies acted in such unison, that the imperial army under Asaf Khan had to return, not by *imposing* but *accepting* terms from the Deccanis. But the wickedness of Hamid Khan soon changed the face of the situation. The ascendancy of Mustafa Khan and his pro-Mughal party in Bijapur (1627-48) was also not calculated to help in the continuation of the united front against the imperialists. Shah Jahan, on the other hand, was wild with his father-in-law over his failure at Bijapur and was determined on more vigorous action. At such a moment the folly of Hamid Khan brought about a shocking crime in the Nizamshahi in the shape of the murder of Lukhji Jadhav Rao and several members of his family (25 July 1629). Suspicion of treason might have instigated this tragedy in that atmosphere of intrigue and disloyalty. But whatsoever the reason, it certainly served to alienate from Murtaza even the recently restored Shahji Bhosle. Along with some other frightened and disaffected servants of the Nizamshahi, Shahji felt it expedient to join the Mughals. The Mughal chronicler, Abdul Hamid Lahauri, writes:

'At this time, Shahuji Bhosle, son-in-law of Jadu Rai, the Hindu commander of Nizamshah's army, came in and joined Azam Khan (the Mughal commander). After the murder of Jadu Rai,...Shahuji broke off his connexion with Nizam Shah, and retiring to the districts of Puna and Chakan, he wrote to Azam Khan proposing to make his submission upon receiving a promise of protection. Azam Khan wrote to court and received orders to accept the proposal. Shahuji then came and joined him with 2000 horse. He received a *khil'at*, a *mansab* of 5000, and gift of two *lacs* of rupees, and other presents. His brother Minaji (Manaji?) received a robe and a *mansab* of 3000 personal and 1500 horse. Samaji (Sambhaji), son of Shahuji, also received a robe and a *mansab* of 2000 personal and 1000 horse. Several of their relations and dependants also obtained gifts and marks of distinction.' (Nov. 1630).

Wisdom dawned on Murtaza too late, and when he tried to mend matters, the remedy proved fatal to himself. Disgusted with the domination of Hamid Khan, he brought out

Fath Khan from the prison and put him in power. But the restored minister, either out of revenge or mistaking this for a confession of weakness, imprisoned Murtaza and wrote to the Mughal governor Asaf Khan that he had done so because of the Nizamshah's evil character and enmity towards the Emperor, 'for which act he expected some mark of favour'. In answer he was asked to prove his loyalty and good faith by ridding the world of such a wicked being. Fath Khan on receipt of this hint 'secretly made away with Nizam Shah but gave out that he had died a natural death', (Feb. 1632). Then he placed the deceased King's son Husain (III) on the throne, and having reported the news to the Imperial Court was called upon to submit to the Emperor. Fath Khan thereupon had the *khutba* read in the name of Shah Jahan, and Daulatabad was surrendered to the Mughals along with other rich tribute. Having thus secured the submission of Shahji in 1630 and of Fath Khan in 1632, Shah Jahan returned to Agra (which he had left on 3 Dec. 1629) on 6 March 1632.

The withdrawal of the Emperor from the South was dictated by two considerations: the death of the queen Mumtaz, at Burhanpur (7 June 1631), and the outbreak of a devastating famine in the Deccan at the same time. Concerning the latter calamity Abdul Hamid writes: 'During the past year no rain had fallen in the territories of the Balaghat, and the drought had been especially severe about Daulatabad. In the present year also there had been a deficiency in the bordering countries and a total want in the Deccan and Gujarat. The inhabitants of the two countries were reduced to the direst extremity: Life was offered for a loaf, but none would buy; rank was to be sold for a cake, but none cared for it; the ever bounteous hand was now stretched out to beg for food, and the feet which had always trodden the way of contentment walked about only in search of sustenance. For a long time dog's flesh was sold for goat's flesh, and the pounded bones of the dead were mixed with flour and sold. When this was discovered the sellers were brought to justice. Destitution at length reached such a pitch that men began to devour each other and the flesh of a son was preferred to his love. The numbers of the dying caused obstructions on the

roads, and every man whose dire sufferings did not terminate in death, who retained the power to move, wandered off to the towns and villages of other countries. Those lands which had been famous for their fertility and plenty now retained no trace of productiveness.'

Within a few months of Shah Jahan's return to Agra, Shahji quitted the Mughal camp (June 1632). The ostensible ground for his desertion was his dissatisfaction at the redistribution of rewards once granted to him. On his joining the Mughals, he had been allowed to occupy the districts of Junnar, Sangamner and Byzapur as his estates. A little later, he was asked to stay at Nasik which was the *jagir* of another Mughal officer, Khwaja Abul Hasan. Finally, when Fath Khan surrendered Daulatabad to the Emperor, some of the places previously assigned to Shahji were taken away from him and given to Fath Khan (May 1632). Shahji, therefore returned to the Nizamshahi within a month of this, and seized the districts of Nasik, Trimbak, Sangameshvar, Junnar as well as parts of Northern Konkan. Then followed a tussle between the Mughal forces and the Deccan States which once more came together for the recovery of their lost possessions. The absence of Shah Jahan was an encouraging factor, and Khan-i-khanan Mahabat Khan had retired to Burhanpur leaving Daulatabad in the charge of Khan Dauran Nasir Khan. At Bijapur Mustafa Khan was undoubtedly favourable to the Mughals, as also Fath Khan in the Nizamshahi. But there was a powerful anti-Mughal group in the 'Adilshahi led by Khawas Khan and Randaula Khan. They had also an intrepid Hindu general in their camp, namely, Murar Jagdev, who was friendly towards Shahji. It was this combination that the imperialists were called upon to face at this time. The position was somewhat as follows:

In the extreme east of the Nizamshahi territories was Sholapur which was in the keeping of Sidi Raihan. In the west were Shahji at Pemgad and Srinivas Rao at Junnar. Sidi Saba Saif Khan in Tal-Konkan and Sidi Saba 'Ambar at Rajapuri (Janjira) were practically independent. Bijapur claimed suzerainty over the Mavals and along the Nira river. But owing to the unsettled conditions, and the see-sawing of authority, every petty chieftain and *qile'dar* was obliged to

submit to the most powerful. Expediency rather than consistency and loyalty had become the rule of action for most people. The attitude of the waverers might be illustrated by the conduct of Sidi Saif Khan. While Shahji was rallying the forces of the country in collaboration with Bijapur, he called upon the Sidi to join him. But that recalcitrant captain marched away to Bijapur pretending to submit directly to the 'Adil Shah. Shahji then attacked him and dealt a severe blow from which he was rescued by the friendly intercession of Murar Jagdev. At Bijapur the Sidi was awarded a *jagir* worth two *lakhs*, thereby showing that there was no perfect harmony between the allies, or the party opposed to Khawas Khan was mobilising its strength to overthrow its rivals.

Meanwhile, Shahji, with the support of Murar Jadgev, got crowned at Pemgad another petty princeling belonging to the Nizamshah's family (September 1632) in order to impart legality to his actions. By then he had made himself master of Junnar, Jivdhan, Sunda, Bhorgad, Parasgad, Mahuli, Kohaj, etc. with a personal following of 12,000 troops. The way he set about consolidating his authority may be indicated by his treatment of Srinivas Rao of Junnar. The unwary chieftain was captured along with his castle under the ruse of proposing a marriage between Shahji's eldest son Sambhaji and Srinivas Rao's daughter. Coercion and stratagem were considered a part of the game while playing for higher stakes. Murar Jagdev was acting similarly on behalf of the 'Adil Shah. Aqa Riza was commandant of the important border fortress of Parenda, originally under the Nizam Shah. Owing to his dislike of Fath Khan, he had recently transferred his allegiance to the Mughals. Murar Jagdev now won him over by bribery (23 July 1632). More instructive still are the instances of Jalna and Daulatabad. Mahmud Khan was keeper of the former stronghold under Fath Khan. Both Shahji and the Muhgal general Khan Zaman made a bid for his surrender; but the latter having offered the larger prize, Jalna submitted to the imperial officer (7 October 1632). Mahmud Khan was rewarded with a *mansab* of 4000 *zat*, and 4000 *svar*.

Fath Khan was himself in charge of Daulatabad where in he

had been reinstated. Though he was nominally subject to the Mughals, actually he was ready to side with the strongest party. While carrying on negotiations with Mahabat Khan at Burhanpur, he was won over by the more immediate offers of help made by Shahji and Randaula Khan. The latter paid him 3,00,000 *pagodas* cash, supplied him with provisions and fodder, and promised to leave him in independent possession of Daulatabad. 'That ill-starred foolish fellow,' writes the disappointed Mughal chronicler, 'allured by these promises, broke former engagements (with the Mughals), and entered into an alliance with them.'

Mahabat Khan could not brook this. In January 1633 he sent his son, Khan Zaman, in advance to punish Fath Khan, and himself followed in March next. When the Khan-i-khanan joined his son in the attack on Daulatabad and stormed the fortress with shot and shell, writes Lahauri, Fath Khan 'woke up from his sleep of heedlessness and security. He saw that Daulatabad could not resist the Imperial arms and the vigour of the Imperial commander. To save the honour of his own and Nizam Shah's women, he sent his eldest son Abdu-r-Rasul to Khan-i-khanan (laying the blame of his conduct on Shahuji and the 'Adil-Khanis) ... On the 19th *Zi-l hijja*, Fath Khan came out of the fort and delivered it up.' (17 June 1633). He was rewarded with a *khil'at* and grant of two *lakhs* of rupees (annual), his property was restored to him, and he was admitted into Mughal service. The puppet prince Husain Nizam Shah III was sent a prisoner to Gwalior, and his property was confiscated. (21 Sept. 1633).

Shahji had once declared, that the loss of Daulatabad, which was but one out of the eighty-four fortresses in the Nizam-shahi, was no cause for despair. In July 1633 he gathered round himself, at Bhimgad, an army of seven to eight thousand and seized the country from Poona and Chakan to Balaghat and the environs of Junnar, Ahmadnagar, Sangamner, Trimbak and Nasik. The Mughals tried to tackle him by offer of terms through his cousin Maloji Bhosle, but he felt himself strong enough to reject their offers. The imperialists met with like failure against Murar Jagdev at Parenda. Prince Shuja was sent for the capture of that stronghold (24 Feb. 1634); but it defied him. Azam Khan had attempted

it three years earlier (March 1631), but with no better result. On both the occasions the valour of Murar Jagdev baffled the Mughals. With the approach of rains, and lack of provisions, Shuja withdrew in May 1634. These failures broke the heart of Khan-i-khanan who died on 26 October that same year, with the task of subjugating the Deccan still unaccomplished.

To retrieve the Imperial position, Khan Dauran was sent as Viceroy in January 1635. He chased Shahji out of the environs of Daulatabad where he was collecting revenue at Ramdud. Shahji escaped to Junnar *via* Sevgaon and Amarpur across the Mohri Ghat, losing 8000 oxen laden with grain, arms, and rockets, along with 3000 followers who were taken prisoner. The *Shiva Bharat* states that he was still master of the territories enclosed between the rivers Godavari, Pravara, Nira and Bhima, besides the Maval and Konkan. What strengthened him further was his alliance with Bijapur. To tackle this situation Shah Jahan himself moved into the Deccan, arriving at Daulatabad on 21 February 1636.

The time was certainly opportune for him. Mustafa Khan and Khawas Khan were at loggerheads in Bijapur. The former had been sent to prison by the latter (in 1633); but the situation soon recoiled on Khawas. The instrument of the reaction was Randaula Khan who had fallen out with Murar Jagdev and Khawas Khan. Finding himself in danger Khawas appealed for Mughal help, but was murdered along with Murar Jagdev, before the Mughals could come to their rescue (1635). The ascendancy of Randaula Khan, however, did not affect the alliance with Shahji. Therefore Shah Jahan decided to act with caution.

The imperial army was divided into three parts, each being led respectively by Khan Dauran, Khan Zaman, and Sha'ista Khan. The first was sent towards Kandhar and Nanded (in the border between Golkonda and Bijapur territories), with instructions to ravage the country and besiege the forts of Udgir and Avse. The second division, under Khan Zaman, was directed towards Ahmadnager to capture or devastate Shahji's possessions from Chamargonda and Ashti to the Konkan. The third was to conquer Junnar, Sangamner, Nasik and Trimbak. Finding that Bijapur was not shaken by these manœuvres, Shah Jahan finally ordered the devastation

of the 'Adilshahi territories as well. These tactics, perhaps reinforced by intrigues through the pro-Mughal Mustafa Khan succeeded in detaching Bijapur from Shahji. On 6 May 1636 a treaty between the Emperor and 'Adil Shah was signed, followed by another, in June, with Golkonda. The purpose of these engagements was to isolate Shahji : after defining the share-out of the Nizamshahi territories (as indicated in the preceding chapter), it was particularly stipulated that the Adil Shah should give no quarter to the rebel Shahji until he submitted to the Emperor and surrendered Junnar and the other Nizamshahi forts to the imperialists, and agreed to take up service under Bijapur. Failing such surrender on the part of Shahji, 'Adilshahi forces were to co-operate with the imperial generals in the reduction of the Maratha rebel.

Thus deserted and betrayed by Bijapur, Shahji became a fugitive hunted from fort to fort, until, at last he was forced to submit under the combined pressure of the confederate armies. The *Shiva Bharat* names the following among Shahji's supporters in this grave extremity: his only friends in need : namely, Ghatge, Kate, Gaikwad, Kank, Thomre, Chauhan, Mohite, Mahadik, Kharate, Pandhare, Wagh, Ghorpade, etc.—all Marathas. His own family was at Junnar with his eldest son Sambhaji among its defenders. But they were all pursued and driven over the Ghats into the Konkan. It was the rainy season, and the Mughal force under Khan Zaman was for a time held up by the floods in the Mula, Mutha and Indrayani rivers, between Poona and Lohgad. Shahji wavered for a while between Mahuli and Muranjan forts before making a final stand. He even sought assistance and shelter at the hands of the Portuguese. But, in the face of the 'Adilshahi and Mughal pursuers, they dared not take any risks. 'The Council unanimously agreed,' frankly states the Portuguese record, 'that, concerning Shahji, who was pursued by two such powerful enemies as the Mughals and Adil Shah, with whom we are at peace and on friendly terms, *it was not convenient to favour and help openly*, nor give him shelter in the fortress of Chaul, but, in case he were to go to Danda (Rajapuri) or wherever he should think best, that way he could be helped with all precaution.'

Finally driven to bay, Shahji decided to take shelter within

Mahuli which had been lately surrendered to him by its Maratha commandant Mambaji Bhosle. There he was closely invested and forced to submit : 'He was told that if he wished to save his life he should come to terms with 'Adil Khan; for such was the Emperor's command. He was also advised to be quick in doing so, if he wished to escape from the swords of the besiegers. So he was compelled into submission to 'Adil Khan, and besought that a treaty might be made with him. After the arrival of the treaty, he made some absurd inadmissible demands,' writes the imperial historian, 'and withdrew from the agreement he had made. But the siege was pressed on and the final attack drew near, when Sahu came out of the fort and met Randaula half way down the hill, and surrendered himself with the young Nizam. He agreed to enter the service of 'Adil Khan, and to surrender the forts of Junnar, Trimbak, Tringalwari, Haris, Jund and Harsira, which were delivered over to Khan Zaman ... Randaula, under the orders of 'Adil Khan, placed the young Nizam in the hands of Khan Zaman, and then went to Bijapur accompanied by Sahu.' (November 1636). Here ended the first phase of Shahji's restless career. It synchronised almost exactly with the Nizamshahi's struggle for existence (1594-1636). With the extinction of that Kingdom and Shahji's entry into the Adilshahi service, we turn from the Deccan proper to peninsular India; from the fortunes of a growing Empire in the North to the misfortunes of a languishing Empire in the South.

The period which followed the treaty between the Mughal Emperor and the Deccan Sultans afforded the latter a respite on their northern frontiers which they fully utilized for extending their dominions southwards. Golkonda and Bijapur were, like the now extinguished Nizamshahi, inheritors of the Bahmani traditions. The renewal of the war with what remained of the once glorious Vijayanagar Empire, was therefore, quite traditional for them. Besides there were alluring prospects in the South from whose territories and treasures the Sultans could compensate themselves for losses sustained by them at the hands of the Mughals. To these temptations were added the inviting dissensions of the scions and vassals of Vijayanagar (*viz.* the Nayaks of Ikkeri, Mysore,

Ginji, Tanjore, Madura, etc.) who by their suicidal antagonisms undid all the good work of the great Rayas. As the Jesuit Antoine de Proenza significantly observed, in 1659: 'The old kings of this country appear, by their jealousies and imprudent actions, to invite the conquest of entire India by the Muslims.' *Muhammad-nama* (official chronicle of the Kings of Bijapur) plainly declares: 'As the Karnatak and Malnad had not been conquered before by any Muslim king of the Deccan, Muhammed 'Adil Shah thought of bringing them under his sway *in order to strengthen and glorify the Islamic religion in the dominion of the Hindus*' and 'to win for himself the titles of *Mujahid* and *Ghazi*,' adds the *Basatin-u's-Salatin*.

The objectives being thus settled, geography and their relative strength and status determined the respective shares in the spoils of victory between Bijapur and Golkonda. Tentatively it was agreed upon that Golkonda was to extend along the East coast below the Krishna delta, and Bijapur to conquer Western Karnatak, Malnad, and the Mysore plateau. The forces of the two inevitably met in the Eastern Carnatic near Ginji, and thereafter the division depended upon *force majeure*. Machiavellian *real politik* really decided the fate of small and great principalities where grab as grab can was the only guiding principle, and neither 'border nor breed' was respected.

The century which followed the disaster of Rakkastangadi (1565) was one of disintegration for the Vijayanagar dominions. From our point of view it closes with the death of Shahji in 1664. Venkatapati II and Sri Ranga III were the last two rulers of the Aravidu dynasty who struggled heroically to preserve their great inheritance (1630-64). But the Nayaks and polygars, their nominal vassals, saw to it that they did not succeed. The petty chiefs of Ikkeri, Mysore, Ginji, Madura and Tanjore, who were originally officers of Vijayanagar, had gradually become its feudatories, and then independent rulers. Now they acted as enemies, rebels and traitors. A Dutch record of the time speaks of 'the Tijmerage (Timma Raja), commander of the King of Carnatica, who had revolted against the King and arrested him, and except a few fortresses had conquered the whole country'.

Though ultimately all of them went the way of traitors, for the time being, these short-sighted and selfish rebels played havoc with the remnants of the Vijayanagar Empire. Our interest lies chiefly in the work of Shahji and the Marathas who came into this disturbed atmosphere as agents and auxiliaries of the Bijapur King, but remained in the South to found a dominion of their own.

Shahji served under Muhammad 'Adil Shah (1636–56) and 'Ali 'Adil Shah (1656–64). The Bijapur kingdom survived him only twenty-two years, for it was absorbed in the Mughal Empire in 1686. The principal generals who led the southern campaigns were Randaula Khan (1636–43), Mustafa Khan (1643–48), and Khan Muhammad (1648–57). Shahji was associated with all of them practically throughout, and rose to be latterly one of the most important Bijapur generals. He was appointed governor at Bangalore and entrusted with the work of consolidation and extension of the 'Adil-Shahi authority. Occasionally he was misunderstood or misrepresented by his Muslim colleagues, and suffered arrest or imprisonment more than once. But every time he vindicated himself successfully, and died in harness as a loyal servant of the 'Adil Shah in 1664. The self-respecting and independent tone of his letter to 'Ali 'Adil Shah (excerpt cited at the head of this chapter) is indicative of his strength and importance in 1657. His southern activities certainly proved more fruitful for Maratha history than his earlier adventures in the Nizamshahi.

Shahji's antecedents at the commencement of his enforced 'Adilshahi service must be borne in mind in order to be able to assess his position correctly. Though defeated in war it is not to be forgotten that he had been lately ally of his present master. Secondly though deprived of his other Nizamshahi possessions, his *jagirs* in Poona and Supa were left to him. These formed the nucleus round which his gifted son Shivaji developed his power and empire. We shall speak of these developments in later chapters, but here it must be remembered that the activities of both father and son were to have important repercussions on each other.

Between 1637 and 1640 three expeditions were sent into the Malnad area of Mysore. They were led by Randaula Khan

and Shahji who were old friends. The first was against Ikkeri and Basavapattana, which were ruled respectively by Virabhadra and Kenge Hanuma. The *Muhammad-nama* relates : Keng Nayak, the Raja of Basavapattana, who had an ill-will against Virabhadra, through the deplorable propensity of taking revenge, informed Rustum-i-Zaman (Randaula Khan). 'I will help you in conquering the whole country, but you should first invade Ikkeri. I will show you a path by which you can reach Ikkeri quickly, and Virabhadra will not catch scent of your coming. You will gain an easy victory over him if you will give me one *lakh* of *hons* as my reward and commend me to your king,' Rustum-i-Zaman agreed to this. The result of this treachery was that Ikkeri was conquered (1637) and Virabhadra was compelled to cede half of his territory and pay a tribute of 18 *lakhs* of *hons*. Virabhadra then shifted his capital to Bidnur. Two years later a punitive expedition was led against the Nayak for not having paid the stipulated tribute. 'Ikkeri might have been annexed,' writes Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, 'but was saved by the intervention of Shahji, and agreed to be a vassal kingdom under Bijapur.' An inscription of 1641 speaks of Virabhadra as having 'given protection to the southern kings who were alarmed by the great army of the Patushah'.

The next expedition was against Kasturi Ranga of Sira and Kempe Gauda of Bangalore (1638). The former division was led by Afzal Khan and the latter by Randaula Khan and Shahji. Following the morality of Pizarro at Mexico (against Ātahualpa) and anticipating his own fate at Pratapgad, Afzal Khan murdered the chief of Sira during a feigned interview, and captured his stronghold. The chief of Tadpatri saved himself by cleverly diverting the Muslim army to Bangalore. The latter place was conquered by Randaula and Shahji and made the headquarters of the Bijapur authority under Shahji. Srirangapattana was next attacked (1639). But according to a contemporary Kannada work (*Kanthirava Narasarajendra Vijaya* by Govinda Vaidya composed in 1648) the Muslims were defeated and driven out. The *Muhammad-nama*, however, claims that the Raja, after a month's resistance, saved his kingdom by paying a tribute of five *lakhs* of *hons*. The *Shiva Bharat* attributes the victory to

Shahji's valour which it says was applauded by Rustam-i-Zaman (Randaula Khan). It also adds that the Nayaks of Kaveripattana and Madura also submitted during this campaign.

The third expedition was provoked by the revolt of Kenge Hanuma who appears to have engineered a general rising of the Hindu *rajas* in 1639. He had gathered together an army of 70,000 men to defend his capital city of Basavapattana. But his bitter enemy Virabhadra of Bidnur saw in this an opportunity for revenge and joined the Bijapur forces. The defenders made heroic resistance, but Basavapattana was conquered. Kenge Nayak was obliged to pay 40 *lakhs* of *hons*. Shahji, from all accounts, is said to have played a prominent part in this campaign. Minor raids were directed towards Belur, Tumkur, and Chiknaikana Halli, the last of which alone yielded 20,000 *hons;* another 30,000 were got from Ballapur. An abortive understanding with Sri Ranga Rayal was attempted, but it proved of little consequence. Rustum-i-Zaman carried away all the movable treasures from Kolihal (Kunigal, 40 m.w. of Bangalore) and left the empty fortress to Sri Ranga, 'as agreed to before'.

The revolt of Sivappa Nayak, successor of Virabhadra of Bidnur, in 1643, opened the next stage of the conquest. Khani-khanan Muzafer-u'd-Din was dispatched to suppress the rebellion. His success in this earned for him the title of Khan Muhammad Muhammadshahi. He effected the further conquests of Nandiyal and eight other strongholds, during the year following, in the Karnool District (1644-45). The major campaign, however, was entrusted to Nawab Khan Baba Mustafa Khan in 1646.

Marching *via* Gadag and Laxmeshvar (June 1646) Mustafa Khan was joined by Asad Khan and Shahji (3 Oct.) at Honhalli—12 m. w. of Basavapattana. Other chiefs came in at Sakkarepattana (Kadur District) among whom were Shivappa-Nayak of Bidnur, Dodda Nayak of Harpanhalli, Kenge Nayaak's brother, the Desais of Laxmeshvar and Koppal, as well as Marathas like Abaji Rao Ghatge and Balaji Haibat Rao. At Shivaganga even envoys from the Nayaks of Ginji, Madura and Tanjore came to meet the invaders: indeed a portentous symptom of the prevailing chaos. Sri Ranga Rayal, the no-

minal suzerain of these rebellious Nayaks, attempted to coerce them with an army of 12,000 horse and 3,00,000 men, but found it an impossible task. An English Factory record notes: 'This country is at present full of wars and troubles for the King [Sri Ranga], and three of his Nagues [Nayaks] are at variance, and the King of Vizapore's army is come into this country on the one side, and the King of Golkonda on the other, both against this King.'

Finding resistance impossible, Sri Ranga tried diplomacy. He sent his Brahman agent Venkayya Somaji to induce the Bijapur general to spare his country. But the Khan refused to be diverted by 'the deceitful words of the Rayal's envoy.' However, Shahji persuaded Mustafa Khan to send his representative Mullah Ahmad to the Rayal at Vellore to discuss terms with him personally. But the Rayal, unfortunately, appeared to have decided upon resistance. Shahji's well meant intercession, therefore, created misgivings in the mind of Mustafa Khan. Nevertheless, the general acted tactfully under the circumstances. Marching on Vellore, he placed Shahji on the right wing of his army, at the same time keeping Asad Khan's division behind him as a safeguard against possible treachery. But Shahji acquitted himself well and did not betray the trust placed in him. Vellore was captured after heavy fighting; 5,800 of Sri Ranga's troops lay dead on the field. The Rayal was thus forced to submit, paying an indemnity of 50 *lakhs* of *hons* and 150 elephants (April 1647). Mustafa Khan returned in triumph to Bijapur, effecting some minor conquests on his way back. Muhammad 'Adil Shah showed his appreciation of the great victory by proceeding as far as the river Krishna to receive the victorious general. The *Muhammad-nama* records the result in characteristic words: 'As the King thought of spreading and strengthening the true faith, he brought Ram Raj (Sri Ranga?) and all other *rajas* of the south under subjection, and the strong temples which the *kafirs* had erected in every fort were completely demolished. The whole country was conquered in three years and the citadel of dualism and idol-worship was given such a rude shock that the knots of the sacred-thread wearers (of Set-band Rameshvar) were snapped.'

Despite the religious fervour reflected in the Muslim chro-

nicler's remarks, the campaign was not a mere fanatical raid. To garner its political fruits the Hindu Shahji was as much depended upon as a Muslim Asad Khan. A *farman* issued on 11 January 1648 (a day after Mustafa Khan was again dispatched to the South) bespeaks of the confidence placed by Muhammad Shah in the Maratha general. It enjoins on Yashvant Rao Wadve equal obedience to the commands of the Nawab Khan Baba (*i.e.* Mustafa Khan) and Shahji who is referred to in endearing term such as *Maharaj Farzand* Shahji Bhosle. He is asked, 'being in agreement with the Maharaj' to practise loyalty to Government.

This last campaign under Mustafa was due to an invitation from Tirumala Nayak of Madura who had quarrelled with the Nayaks of Ginji and Tanjore. The combined forces of Tirumala and Mustafa invested the fort of Ginji, but the siege was protracted on account of the severe famine which was raging all around. Suddenly, in the midst of these prolonged operations, Shahji was arrested by Mustafa. According to the *Basatin-u's Salatin*, 'Some incidents happened which became the cause of disunion and disaffection between Shahji and Mustafa Khan.' Further details of the incident are thus stated in the *Muhammad-nama:* 'When the siege of Ginji was protracted, and fighting continued long, the cunning Shahji, who changed sides like the dice of a gambler, sent an agent to Nawab Mustafa Khan begging leave to go to his own country and give repose to his troops. The Nawab replied that to retire then would be tantamount to desertion. Then Shahji remonstrated that grain was too dear in the camp, and his soldiers could no longer bear the privation and strain of the siege. He added that he was retiring to his country without waiting for further orders. The Nawab being convinced that Shahji meant mischief, and might show fight, had him arrested (on 25 July 1648) with such extreme cleverness and circumspection that no part of his property was plundered, but the whole was confiscated to Government.'

The *Basatin-u's Salatin* also states that Baji Ghorpade, Yashvant Rao Wadve and Asad Khan were employed in apprehending Shahji. He was surprised in his bed in the early hours of the morning, but his personal contingent of 3000

Maratha horse offered resistance and had to be dispersed. On hearing of this, Muhammad Adil Shah dispatched Afzal Khan 'to bring Shahji away; and an eunuch to attach his property'.

Sir Jadunath Sarkar attributed this arrest of Shahji definitely to his 'disloyal intrigues'. In support of this view he cited a letter from Abdullah Qutb Shah to Haji Nasira (his agent at Bijapur) which alleges that on 23 December 1647 Shahji Bhosle had petitioned him 'begging to be taken under his protection', adding that 'then and repeatedly before this' he had 'rejected Shahji's prayers and told him to serve Adil Shah loyally'. Continuing, Sir Jadunath accused Shahji of 'coquetting with both the Rayal and Qutb Shah,' and states that 'the latter sovereign divulged the fact to Adil Shah.' The Venkayya Somaji incident is also alluded to by him as further supporting his allegation of treason on the part of Shahji. A careful examination of the entire evidence, however, points to a very different conclusion.

We have already noticed how the misgivings about Shahji's loyalty, caused by his misplaced sympathy towards Sri Ranga Rayal's agent, were proved baseless by his conduct at Vellore in November 1646. If he had started 'coquetting' with the Qutb Shah between November 1646 and 23 December 1647 (the date of the alleged appeal to Qutb Shah) and had 'repeatedly' done so during these thirteen months, the Adil Shah, after being informed about it by Qutb Shah, could not have issued the *farman*, on 11 January 1648, to Yashvant Rao Wadve asking him to act in obedience to *Maharaj Farzand* Shahji Bhosle. The allegation of disloyalty before 11 January 1648, therefore, stands disproved.

During the short period of six months and two weeks (11 January to 25 July 1648) preceding Shahji's arrest, there was all round dissatisfaction owing to the lack of provisions and the strain of the prolonged operations. Khairiyat Khan and Sidi Raihan were as dissatisfied as Shahji. The hardships referred to by Shahji were, therefore, real and not only a pretext. The *Muhammad-nama* itself complains that even the Qutb Shah (whose forces were defeated by Sri Ranga Rayal) formed a secret understanding with the infidels and sent Mir Jumla, his general, to assist in the defence of Ginji.

But Mir Jumla arrived too late and was defeated by the Bijapur general Baji Ghorpade. Sir Jadunath himself states that Abdullah Qutb Shah wrote 'whimpering to Shah Jahan that Adil Shah had broken his promise and was forcibly taking away Qutb Shah's portion'. In these circumstances we are inclined to be sceptical about the allegation against Shahji. Qutb Shah who was himself intriguing against Adil Shah could not have 'divulged' the repeated advances of Shahji if they had been true.

Mustafa Khan died under the strain on 9 November 1648. The siege of Ginji was concluded victoriously by his successor Khan Muhammad on 28 December the same year. Shahji was all the time (25 July to 28 December 1648) detained at Ginji. Had he been guilty of treason, he would have been post haste dispatched to Bijapur, especially as Afzal Khan had been specially deputed for the purpose. The prisoner was, however, actually taken to the capital along with the treasures—'property beyond calculation and 39 elephants for the King', which looks incredible had Shahji been really guilty of the offence for which he is supposed to have been arrested. The party led by Afzal Khan (which included Shahji) was received by Adil Shah 'in the Kalyan Mahal which had been decorated for the *Nauroz* festivities'.

The treatment of Shahji at Bijapur and the terms of his release go to confirm our belief that his arrest was not due to treason. He was kept in ordinary confinement under Ahmad Khan, *sar sar-i-naubat*, and told that 'he would be pardoned and restored to his former honours if he surrendered to the King the forts of Kondana, Bangalore, and Kandarpi'. Ahmed Khan, by the King's order conveyed Shahji to his own house and imparted to him 'the happy news of the royal favour and did his utmost to compose his mind. Shahji decided to obey and wrote to his two sons ... to deliver the forts to the Sultan's officers immediately.....They obeyed promptly. Thus all the numerous misdeeds of Shahji were washed away by the stream of royal mercy. The Sultan summoned Shahji to his presence, *gave him the robe of a minister, aud settled his former lands on him again.*' Had Shahji been really guilty of treason, he would have been beheaded like Khawas Khan or torn to pieces like Murar

Jagdev in 1635. That he should have been so honourably acquitted in the face of bitter enemies at the Court, who were thirsting for Shahji's blood, speaks volumes for his integrity as well as importance.

'The nobles and gentry of the city', says the *Muhammad-nama*, 'were astonished at the graciousness of the King and began to say : "Shahji Raja deserves to be put to death, and not to be kept under guard." ... Some councillors did not at all like that Shahji should be set free, because that faithless man ... would play the fox again. Many others held the view that to liberate this traitor and ruined wretch would be like treading on the tail of a snake ... No wise man would rest his head on a hornet's nest as on a pillow.' Obviously Muhammad Shah was no fool to invest such a man with 'the robe of a minister'.

Between the arrest and release of Shahji only less than ten months had elapsed (25 July 1648 to 15 May 1649). Of these over five months had been spent at Ginji without trial. The journey from Ginji to Bijapur must have occupied at least a month. Finally, after about three months detention, perhaps as a state prisoner, he was sent back to the south with no stigma of a traitor attaching to him. Nevertheless, this experience appears to have brought about a metamorphosis in the mind of this loyal servant of Bijapur. Though an earlier *farman* of Adil Shah, dated 1 August 1644, speaks of Shahji as a 'reprobate' in connexion with the activities of Dadaji Konddev, nothing of an incriminating character had evidently been established against him personally. Kanhoji Jedhe had been sent against Dadaji on that occasion; but later he must have joined Shahji. For, the following interesting entry, dated 16 May 1949, is found in the *Jedhe Shakavali* :—

'Shahji was released in return for Kondana. At that time, Kanhoji Jedhe and Dadaji Krishna Lohkare *were also released.* They met the Maharaj who said to them : You have been put to the hardships of captivity on account of me. As to our future : The King of Bijapur ordered me to lead an expedition into Karnatak to which I replied, "How can I do it with my income from only twelve villages?" Thereupon the King promised to confer on me the province of Bangalore

yielding five *lakhs* of *hons*. I have undertaken this enterprise on these terms.

'Your *watan* is in *Maval*, and my son Shivba occupies Khedebare and Poona. You should help him with your troops; and since you are influential in those parts, you should see that all the Maval Deshmukhs submit to him and obey him. Thus you should all assert your strength, and should any Mughal or Adilshahi army march against you, you should fight them in full faithfulness to Shivba.'

This record explicitly conveys to us Shahji's attitude towards Shivaji and his activities. We shall have occasion, at a later stage, to consider this more appropriately. But it in no way contradicts what we have already said about the conduct and character of Shahji. While being not less loyal than most other Bijapur officers, his private interests demanded the most jealous safeguarding. The tone of his letter to Ali Adil Shah, dated 1657, referred to before, clearly indicates this very natural desire. Government officers of Shahji's standing in medieval times were feudal vassals. Their *jagirs* and personal estates were not under the direct jurisdiction of the king who was merely their suzerain. It was the desire of every big officer to increase his *jagirs*, and Shahji was no exception. While he personally tried to augment his southern estates through loyal service, he could not but wink at the activities of his gifted and assertive son. His unjustifiable arrest must have brought home to him rather piquantly the precariousness of his position. It was a lucky circumstance that Shivaji was carving out an independent position for himself. While it was incumbent on him to continue in the service of Bijapur, as well as expedient, it was neither paternal nor human for him to take any other attitude towards his recalcitrant son. Shahji was, therefore, obliged under the circumstances to maintain as good a face with the Adil Shah as he possibly could, without in any way jeopardising or hampering the good work that Shivaji was doing. If at all, he would help and encourage without compromising his position and interests in the south. This was the obvious degree of his 'reprobation', in the eyes of the Adil Shah, which could not be established as 'treason'. Besides, Shahji was too important an officer in Karnatak, almost indispensable, to be exe-

cuted or antagonised. Affairs in the Adilshahi were fast running to a crisis after the death of Mustafa Khan. Muhammad Shah's protracted illness (1646-56) culminating in his death, and the slur of illegitimacy cast over his successor Ali Adil Shah, constituted a period of great trepidation which was rendered worse by the chronic factiousness of the nobles. The murder of Khan Muhammad, the successor of Mustafa Khan and victor of Ginji, on 11 November 1657, was an event as symptomatic, if not portentous, as the assassination of Mahmud Gawan in the last days of the Bahmani kingdom.

Aurangzeb's last viceroyalty of the Deccan (1652–57) was also another source of great danger to the Deccan States. His operations against Golkonda were no doubt frustrated by the over-riding policy of Shah Jahan (April 1656), but he had succeeded in winning over the experienced and powerful general Mir Jumla. Sir William Foster writes: 'In September 1654 the English factors reported a fresh development in the unstable politics of the Coast. The king of Golkonda, Abdullah Qutb Shah, had long been jealous of the power wielded by his servant Mir Jumla, and an open breach had now occurred between them. The latter was suspected of an intention of making himself an independent sovereign of the territory he had conquered in the Carnatic; but he was well aware of the difficulty of standing alone, and after making overtures to the King of Bijapur, he finally succumbed to the intrigues of Aurangzeb, who as viceroy of the Deccan was eagerly watching for an opportunity to interfere.....Towards the end of 1655–an act provoked by the haughty behaviour of his son—precipitated the crisis, and drove Mir Jumla into the arms of Aurangzeb, with disastrous results to the Golkonda kingdom.' Much the same was to happen to the Adilshahi.

Aurangzeb attacked Bijapur in 1657. Though Shah Jahan again interfered, the Adil Shah had to surrender Bidar, Kalyani and Parenda besides paying a tribute of one *crore* of rupees. The Mughal war of succession, occasioned by Shah Jahan's illness, provided a short, though welcome respite to Bijapur and Golkonda (1657-65). When the campaign was resumed, it ended in the extinction of the only two Muslim Sultanates of the south (1686-87) still remaining.

That Shahji had remained loyal to the Adil Shah even after his arrest and release is indicated by a Portuguese letter dated 11 April 1654. It states that, 'The persons acceptable to the King Idalxa and according to his belief loyal to him are Fatecan, Xagi, (*i.e.* Shahji) and Malique Acute.' But the game of independence was being played by all around him, great and small. He was no longer under the tutelage of a superior Muslim officer, and could more and more act on his own initiative; perhaps also in his own interest as well as anybody else. As a matter of fact Muslim power in the south was palpably dwindling. Like the tail of a serpent whose head has been caught inextricably in a trap, the Adilshahi and Qutbshahi authority over Karnatak was doomed to spasmodic withdrawal. But there was no one in the peninsula strong enough to take its place. Kanthirava Narasaraja Wodeyar of Mysore and Tirumala Nayak of Madura, who had made themselves independent as well as powerful, died in 1658. Sri Ranga Rayal was struggling tragically to recover his lost inheritance, but all his efforts proved in vain. 'Here is nothing but taking and retaking of places with parties of both sides in all places,' observes a contemporary European witness. The lack of unity among the native rulers is well indicated by the Jesuit records from Madura: 'Tirumala Nayak (while he was still alive) instead of co-operating in the re-establishment of the affairs of Narasinga (*i.e.* Sri Ranga), who alone could save the country, recommended negotiations with the Muhammadans, opened to them again the passage through the Ghats, and urged them to declare war against the King of Mysore whom he should have sought for help. (The King of) Bisnagar, betrayed a second time by his vassal, succumbed to the contest, and was obliged to seek refuge on the confines of his kingdom in the forests where he led a miserable life...a prince made unhappy by the folly of his vassals, whom his personal qualities rendered worthy of a better fate.'

The same writer notes how the Muslims profited from such a state of things: 'Kanakan (Khan-i-khanan) did not wish to leave the country without levying ransom on Tanjore and Madura. He raised contributions and returned to Bijapur full of riches.' Further, 'The Muslims have already been

for several months in possession of this beautiful and fertile country; no one knows now what their ulterior designs are; whether they will establish themselves there or will content themselves with collecting the riches they can find there.'

One feels tempted to quote copiously from the contemporary Jesuit accounts which are one of our very important sources of information. Father Proenza writes in 1659: 'Muthu Virappa Nayak, Tirumala's successor, appeared to rectify the mistakes of his father and throw off the yoke of the Muhammadans. Resolved to refuse the annual tribute which they had imposed, he began to make preparations for a vigorous resistance, and furnished with soldiers and munitions the fortress of Trichinopoly which was the key to his dominions on the northern side. The King of Tanjore, instead of imitating his example and co-operating with him, sent his ambassadors to Idal Khan; while he wasted time in negotiation, the enemy's army crossed the mountains and appeared before Trichinopoly with a preparation which revealed its scheme to conquer all the country. Observing the warlike preparation of the Nayak, it moved towards the east, pretending to devastate the surrounding country; then at a time when one least expected it, it fell on Tanjore on 19 March 1659. This town, situated in the midst of a fertile plain, was not inferior to the strong citadels of Europe.'

This expedition was led by Shahji. The final conquest of Tanjore was effected by his son Vyankoji in 1675. Vyankoji or Ekoji, as he is more familiarly called in the southern and foreign records, was born of Shahji's second wife, Tukabai Mohite. Thus were the foundations of the Maratha kingdom of Tanjore laid. But of this we shall see more later. Shahji's eldest son by his first wife Jijabai, Sambhaji (full brother of Shivaji), appears to have died fighting at Kanakgiri about 1655.

The annals of South India during the last phase of Shahji's life are very chaotic. Apart from the quarrels between the local rulers, the Muslim invaders themselves had fallen out with each other. As early as 14 January 1652, the English factors observed: 'Wars being commenced between the Moors of Golkandah and Vizapore, who having shared this afflicted kingdom, are now bandying against each other, while

the poor Gentue, hoping their destruction, watches opportunity to break of his present miserable yoke.' About ten years later (1660–62) we learn that, 'The Gentue is powerful about the Tanjore country, and if hee overcomes the Balle Gaun (Bahlol Khan) the Vizapur's servant,' tis thought hee'il meet with little or no opposition in all these parts.'

The above impressions relate the activities of Chokkanatha, son of Muttu Virappa, who brought about a temporary coalition by force of arms between Madura, Tanjore and Ginji. In 1662 Linganna, the rebellious Madura general, joined Shahji and besieged Trichinopoly. But Chokkanatha compelled them to seek refuge first in Tanjore and then in Ginji. Linganna, too, was before long reclaimed by the coalition and employed against Shahji. The shrewd Proenza remarks, 'It appears certain that, if then the three Nayaks had joined Sri Ranga with all the troops they could gather, they would easily have succeeded in chasing the common enemy, and depriving him of the advantage he had taken of their disunion and reciprocal betrayal. But Providence which wanted to punish them left them to this spirit of folly which precipitated the ruin of those princes and their dominions.'

The nature of the unspeakable ruin brought about by the chronic warfare is described in the Jesuit letters: Pestilence followed in the wake of war. 'The Muslims were the first victims of pestilence, having been themselves the cause of it. Their horses and men perished of famine in such large numbers that the corpses could not be buried or burnt, but were flung in the midst of the field, which imprudent act bred diseases and increased the mortality.' The inhumanity of man was worse. 'But nothing can equal the cruelties which the Muhammadans employ,' writes an eye-witness. 'Expression fails me to recount the atrocities which I have seen with my eyes; and if I were to describe them truth would be incredible. To the present horror are added the fears of what is to happen; for it is announced that Idal Khan sends a strong army to raise contributions, which the Nayaks had promised, by force.'

As an instance of such devastating raids we might cite Vana Mian's behaviour when he was baffled by the defence of Trichinopoly fort: 'The besiegers broke out on the country,

devastated the harvest, burnt the villages, and captured the inhabitants to be made slaves. It is impossible to describe the scenes of horror which then enveloped this unhappy country. The Indian nobility, thinking it infamy to fall into the hands of these despicable beings, did not fear to seek refuge in death, less frightful in their eyes than such a dishonour. A large number, after slaying their women and children, plunged the sword into their own bodies and fell on their corpses. Entire populations were seen resorting to this tragic death. In other villages the inhabitants gathered in several houses to which they set fire and perished in their flames.'

War is nothing if it is not barbarous. Consequently, it would be unfair to suggest that the Muslim advance was ever like this. Much depended upon the character of the commanders. Another Jesuit letter from Trichinopoly (1662) states: 'The Muslims under the command of Shahji and Moula, generals of Adil Shah have occupied the realms of Ginji and Tanjore for the last two years, and seem to fix their domination there. *The people have submitted to the yoke of a conqueror from whom they get less cruelty and more justice than from their own sovereigns.*' This certainly shows that Shahji as a general must have acted more humanely and justly than most of his contemporaries. A conqueror indeed reveals his truest character in the moment of his victory. Shahji by his conduct on this occasion earned the goodwill of the conquered who had suffered from the worst horror of war at the hands of others. He thereby paved the way for his successors, the Maratha rulers of Tanjore, who created a condominion in the south alongside of Shivaji's *Svarajya* in the Deccan, whose history, however, we shall not anticipate here. It will follow in due course.

Before concluding this chapter it is necessary to note a few more incidents in Shahji's career which provide a commentary upon his character as a pioneer in the great political adventure of the Marathas. His role was not that of a conscious builder; but he did serve in carrying forward the cause of which his great son Shivaji was the best protagonist. Shahji did not have Shivaji's vision or sense of mission; his was the humbler but most necessary task of preparing the ground—

not by precept but by example, by daring and doing. In this sense he was the most successful among the pioneers of Maratha freedom and prestige. While not being free himself, he made possible the freedom of his people who were fashioned into a nation by the genius of his son. Kanha and the two brave women who fought like tigresses on the battle-field when Ala-u'd-Din Khalji first invaded the Deccan, sowed the seeds of heroic resistance. That seed was fostered by the blood of Shankar-dev and Harpal-dev who preferred to be broken rather than bend before the aggressors. The Koli Nag-nak of Kondana and the Shirkes of Khelna revealed the mettle of which the true Marathas were made; they also demonstrated the strength of the mountain fastnesses and their strategic importance. The innumerable Marathas who sought service under the Bahmani Sultans were, through their very servitude, gathering very valuable experience in arms and in administration that was to constitute the richest asset of later generations. Lukhji Jadhav Rao and others of his stamp sold their services as mercenaries. The Ghorpades by their consistent loyalty continued through generations, redeemed their unpatriotic character by their moral courage and personal dignity. It was left to Shahji Bhosle of all the men of his race and generation to play the more ambitious part of a king-maker and fight for the defence and maintenance of an independent kingdom (the Nizamshahi) in the face of the Mughals and the Adilshahi. If he failed in this, he failed honourably. If he was consequently obliged to accept service under his recent enemy, he served with a sense of realism, courage, dignity, and self-respect. This is nowhere better illustrated than in his letter to Adil Shah II (d. 6 July 1657).

In that letter Shahji asked for a just reward for his recent services at Kanakgiri, Anegondi, Kundgol and Tamgaud. 'Knowing that the prestige and dignity of Your Majesty could not be assured without keeping the frontier tribes in awe, I have enrolled 1500 more men in my army. These cannot be maintained without an addition to my *jagirs*.' He suggests an addition being made adjacent to *Karyat* Akluj or *Tape* Tembhurni, or Bhutagram and Pedne; or else, in Patshahbad or the Vaderu District. He protests against his lands in

Musalkal District and *Karyat* Karve being given away to Trimbakji (Shahji's cousin) without due compensation. He warns, 'If Your Majesty should thus tamper with my concerns, on the advice of worthless fellows, I must remind Your Majesty that we Rajputs have served from old till now under several kings; we have never before served nor shall we do so in future under dishonour and displeasure. We shall not further put up with unfair treatment. I have patiently endured these indignities, during the past eighteen months, with the hope that I shall continue to receive from Your Majesty the treatment and favours I got from Your worthy father. To avoid embarrassing Your Majesty I have waited so long restraining my feelings. If Your Majesty will have my services in future, I claim that my status should be maintained as heretofore. Else, ... I shall retire to some sacred place there to serve the Almighty and pray for Your Majesty.'

Eighteen months later, on 10th December 1959, we read in a letter from Revington (written from Kolhapur): 'One months tyme more will, wee believe, put an end to his ('Adil-Shah's) trouble; for Sevagyes father Shawjee, that lies to the southward, is expected within eight days with his army consisting of 17,000 men, and they intend for Vizapore, the King and Queenes residence, whose strength consists only in men and they are above 10,000 soldyers: *so that in all probability the kingdom will be lost.*' We do not know the exact context of this threatened attack of Shahji on Bijapur. It might have been due to his failure to get satisfaction from the Adil Shah even after his repeated protests. We learn from the Dutch Dagh Register (16 May, 1661) that 'The Neyks of Madura and Tanjouwer and the commander Sahagie, Antosie Pantele, and Lingamaneyk have met to consider an offensive defensive contract which is a serious thing to us. And therefore, the Governor has excused the intended visit of Masulepatnam settlement.' The alliance, however, appears to have soon melted away; for the record continues: 'But afterwards the Governor was informed that the contract mentioned above had been cancelled, and the Neyks have secretly conferred to attack Sahagie.'

This incident explains why Shahji again came to be arrested in 1663 by the Adil Shah. The circumstances leading to it are thus related by a Dutch record of 10 April 1663: Bahlol Khan, the Bijapuri general, came to terms with the Nayak of Tanjore who promised to pay him 300,000 *pardaux*, and the general proceeded against the fortresses of Arni and Bangalore to subdue 'the rebel Sahagie'. But Shahji won over Bahlol Khan. Confirmation of this rebellion of Shahji is to be had in an English letter of 20 July 1663 (from Goa) wherein it is reported: 'This Jassud (spy) sweares before he came out of Banckpore [where Adil Shah was] he saw irons put on Bussall Ckan and Shagee, but taken off the latter in two days: who is now with the king without any command.'

It would be interesting to know in detail the history of this insurrection on the part of one who had been throughout loyal to the 'Adil Shah. It is significant that Shahji was soon restored to favour and sent back to the south, while Bahlol Khan was imprisoned and put to death. Was Shahji influenced by the Hindu confederates of the south, alliance with whom in May 1661 had proved abortive? Or was he being drawn into the vortex of Shivaji's powerful movement for the liberation of the country from the domination of the Muslim rulers? But his resumption of, or acquiescence in the Adilshahi service culminating in his accidental death near Basavapattana, on 23 January 1664, while on a campaign to subdue the recalcitrant chieftains in that region, affords no clue to the inner workings of his mind. He died where he had first begun his earliest expedition under Randaula Khan in 1637–in the Shimoga District of Mysore. He must have been about seventy years of age then (1594-1664); but what a period looked at from the point of view of happenings near Shahji's home-estates of Poona and Supa! But he too served in his own way, with all his limitations, the cause of Maratha dominion in South India. At his death his conquests included Anegondi, Basavapattana, Kanakgiri Bangalore, Kolar, Arni, Ginji, Tegenapatam (Cuddalore) and Porto Novo, besides his personal estates scattered about in the Deccan and Karnatak. They constituted the scaffolding on which his two sons—Shivaji in the Deccan and Ekoji in the South—

were to erect their condominion for the greater glory of the Maratha people. To understand the true inspirations of that national effort we should go deeper than the political and military history of the times.

CHAPTER VI

THE INSPIRATION

> 'The unclean Yavanas have become kings; sins are being committed everywhere; hence, there hath been Divine Manifestation to blot out the evils of Kali. Nama says : The people, having found the Yavanas unendurable, are singing the praise of God : for, these are ever the means of redemption.'—NAMA-DEV.

HINDU reactions to the Muslim domination, we said, were more cultural and religious than political. From the time of Jaipal and Anandapal to the days of Prithviraj, Sangramasinh and Rana Pratap in North India, and the fall of the Yadavas of Devgiri, the Kakatiyas of Warangal, the Hoysalas of Dvarasamudra, and the Pandyas of Madura, kingdom after kingdom had been overthrown by the invading Muslims, and *Dar-u'l-Harb* sought to be converted into *Dar-u'l-Islam*. In all appearance, this revolution was political and brought about by military means. But the critical historian cannot miss two important characteristics : (*a*) that the conquerors were not content with mere loot or political subjugation; (*b*) the vanquished Hindus sooner submitted to the political yoke of the Muslims than to their religious interference. The outer *jihad*, dramatically proclaimed and destructively carried out, was nothing compared with the insidious and constant war that was waged by the protagonists of Islam against the devotees of Hinduism. With noble exceptions like Zain-ul-Abideen's in Kashmir, Husain Shah's in Bengal, and Akbar's at Agra, the Muslim toleration of Hindu institutions and culture was casual, fitful and precarious. It did not depend, as has been supposed by some, on the Hindu parentage of a Muslim in power or his marriage with Hindu women. Malik Kafur, Malik Khusrau, Khan-i-Jahan Maqbul (to mention only a few instances) were not less fanatical than the true-born Muslims who came from outside India, like Mahmud Ghazna or Mahmud Gawan. Wedlock with Hindu

women, employment of Hindus in the army and administration, and even the adoption of the local language in official documents (in the lower reaches of red-tape) did not at all affect the fundamental attitude of the Muslim rulers towards their infidel subjects. *Jiziya* continued to be levied, temples desecrated, and 'infidels' persecuted in innumerable petty ways, after centuries of the conquerors' domicile in India. Yet, the Hindus could no more avoid seeking service under their hateful masters, than the Muslims could carry on without the infidels' co-operation. But though they were militarily conquered and politically subjugated, the Hindus would not allow themselves to be religiously converted or culturally submerged. By a fundamental law of human nature, the greater the repression, the stronger and more rebellious became the reactions. Hindu civilization has survived because of this inexorable law. Defeated on the battle-fields and deposed from the seats of government, it asserted itself with irrepressible vigour in the hearts and homes of the Hindus. Rajasthan, Vijayanagar and Maharashtra have repeatedly demonstrated the truth of this thesis.

The three centuries which elapsed between the first invasion of Ala-u'd-Din Khalji (1295) and the birth of Shahji (1594), constituted a prolonged period of probation for the people of Maharashtra, during which they suffered agonies of soul and body, but deliverance could not come until Shivaji began his great movement in the seventeenth century. Shahji died in 1664, exactly one hundred years after the destruction of the great Hindu empire of Vijayanagar on the battle-field of Rakkastangadi (1565). The inner history of the heart of Maharashtra during this epoch is more meaningful than the outer shell of tutelage which we have described so far. The secret of the amazing success which Shivaji met with in his single generation is unintelligible except in the light of the forces that were at work, far from the courts of kings and their sanguinary activities. Those that have been blind to this vitalising factor have sadly missed the full significance of the pre-Shivaji period of Maratha history.

To the undiscerning and unimaginative rationalist of to-day to whom all religion is superstition, the medieval mind must for ever remain a sealed book. But Faith, transcending

reason, formed the normal texture of the psychology of men and women then, in India and elsewhere. Belief in the supernormal and spiritual forces was for them as obvious as the rising and the setting sun. To dismiss their beliefs as mere superstitions is, therefore, to throw away the only key which can disclose to us the motive springs of their actions. Whether the power that inspired the makers of Maratha history sprang from Tulaja Bhavani or from Khandoba of Jejuri is not a matter for scientific inquest; it is a 'fact' to be admitted as a potent instrument which shaped the life and conduct of the people living in those times. Bhavani and Khandoba were as great realities to the Marathas of the seventeenth century as the goddess Athena and the Oracle of Delphi were to the Greeks of ancient times. The 'fact' for the historian is not that, according to him, miracles did take place, but that *the people sincerely believed that they did happen*; so much did they accept them as realities that their beliefs led them to heroic endeavours. In this sense, Shivaji was no more a pretender than Joan of Arc: some people did feel that inspiration; others did accept it for a fact; and all *acted in that faith.* The task of the historian is to guage and assess the extent and results of these potent forces.

Intellectually and spiritually, there was a new age dawning in Maharashtra when outwardly she was being conquered and subjugated by the armies of Islam. This awakening had a social and political side to it, apart from the spiritual and intellectual. In a word, *Maharashtra-Dharma* was at the root of Maratha *Svarajya* as it was conceived of and politically translated by Shivaji. Its genesis is to be traced back to the protagonists of what is popularly called the Pandharpur movement. It was mystical and devotional to begin with, but before long bore a rich harvest in fields other than the merely religious. It had an esoteric as well as a popular side, a philosophical no less than practical aspect. We are here concerned only with its pragmatic consequences.

Dnaneshvar who died soon after the first invasionof Ala-u'd-Din Khalji, and lived under the patronage of Ramdev Rao of Devgiri, might be considered the progenitor of this great movement. 'The beginning of the mystical line,' according to the author of *Mysticism in Maharashtra*, 'was effectively

made in Maharashtra by Dnanadev...And while a continuous tradition goes on from Dnaneshvar to Namadev, and from Namadev to Ekanath, and from Ekanath to Tukaram, Ramdas like Heracleitus stands somewhat apart in his spiritual isolation.' Further, 'If we reclassify these great Mystics of Maharashtra according to the different types of mysticism, they fall into the following groups: Dnaneshvar is the type of an intellectual mystic; Namadev heralds the democratic age; Ekanath synthesizes the claims of worldly and spiritual life; Tukaram's mysticism is most personal; while Ramdas is the type of an active saint.' Whatever be the school or category to which these saints belonged, the total effect of their combined teachings was the propagation of *Maharashtra Dharma* which had very far-reaching political results.

It is significant that Dnaneshvar chose to interpret the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and to do it in the language of the people, Marathi. Whatever else Dnaneshvar may stand for, he rendered a great service to the cause of Maratha freedom by this double choice. In this respect, he stands with Gautama Buddha, John Wycliffe and Martin Luther. From a purely linguistic point of view, he did for Marathi what Chaucer did for English: a 'well of the vernacular pure and undefiled'. He brought philosophy and religion from the heights of the Himalayas, as it were, to the hearts and homes of Maharashtra. This democratic service was indeed both timely and fruitful.

The state of Maharashtra when Dnaneshvar appeared was a shade worse than that of Europe when Luther preached and protested. Theological and metaphysical obscurantism had been carried to excess without reference to the morals of the people. The situation has been well described by Rajwade: 'In the latter half of the thirteenth century, under the Yadavas, the Marathas were too very engrossed with the good things of life, though they clothed them in the garb of religion. Their most honoured gospel was the *Chaturvarga Chintamani* of Hemadri: in which the *Shrutis*, *Smritis* and *Puranas* were pedantically paraded as authorities for feeding Brahmans with prescribed feasts in propitiation of particular deities for every day in the year. From Hemadri's *Vratakhanda* it would appear that no fewar than 2000 ceremonies were to be performed in the course of 365 days! For him, indeed

there was no distinction between feasting and religion. There is not to be found in any other language, in any other part of the globe, a work of that character making a fetish of such things.' The consequence was that the people became ignorant, superstitious and effeminate; and the foreigners took full advantage of their incapacity to resist. Elsewhere we have noticed the sectarianism that was rampant; in the midst of great learning there was a tragic lack of wisdom. Besides the language of religion was the sacred Sanskrit, of which the masses as well as classes were ignorant: a microscopic minority of erudite pandits enjoyed the monopoly of exploiting the superstitious beliefs of the people. The obvious remedy for such evils was to break through this monopoly by spreading enlightenment of the purest sort through the medium of Marathi. Mukundaraj and the Mahanubhavas had attempted this before Dnaneshvar, but the Bastille had not fallen. The cult of the Mahanubhavas was too heretical to be popular on a wide scale; and the metaphysics and mysticism of Mukundaraj were too esoteric to be understood or assimilated by the many. Two of his tenets certainly militated against the needs of the situation, namely, his conviction that 'a mystic should never reveal his inner secret, lest the people might deride it,' and that contemplation on the *Paramamrita* 'turns back the devotee from the world and enables him to see the vision of his Self.' Dnaneshvar, on the other hand, rightly adopted the popular exposition of a popular text as the instrument of his instruction. Not that the *Dnaneshvari*, (or *Bhavartha-dipika*) is less traditionally philosphical; but in it the genius of the commentator has translated the deepest truths in idiom and wealth of homely illustration, that his work has remained unrivalled as a classic of popular enlightenment. So far-reaching was its influence that the barber Sena sang of the great service rendered by Dnaneshvar in revealing the surest path to salvation, and overflowing with a sense of obligation declared: 'Large-hearted is his benevolence, like that of father and mother, how can I; poor soul, express the unrequitable! He has indeed shown the true path, and imparted life to the inert.' To this day, the pilgrims to Pandharpur and Dehu sing as they move along '*Dnanadev-Tukaram*! *Dnanoba-Tukaram* !'

Dnanadev wrote his *Anubhavamrita* or 'Elixir of Experience' for the few; *Bhavartha-dipika*, or 'Light on the Essential Meaning' (of the Gita), for the many; and *Abhangs*, or devotional lyrics, for all. The second of these, popularly known as the *Dnaneshvari*, very properly conveyed the message of Sri Krishna, a message of hope, of action, of courage and duty—to the bewildered people of Maharashtra in the days of their undoing at the hands of the invading Muslims. The *Gita* has been commented upon by men of genius in every age, stressing one or the other aspect of its comprehensive philosophy to suit the needs of their time and generation. But any attempt to read into the *Dnaneshvari* anything less than its universal meaning might appear too arbitrary and unwarrantable. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the work breathes a contemporary and local atmosphere, even while it envisages a wider and timeless truth. For illustration, we might cite Dnaneshvar's description of *Daivi* and *Asuri Sampatti*. It is not in the language of Shri Krishna or Vyasa but in that of a Deccani writer of the medieval times. Without seeking in it the historical accuracy of a *Domesday Survey*, we might, without exaggeration still look for local colour in its terms and illustrations. The shortcomings of Ramdev Rao's contemporaries could not have been absent from the mind of Dnaneshvar when he wrote his great commentary.

The intellectual atmosphere of his time is well reflected, for instance, in the thirteenth chapter, verses 653-842. He speaks of a villager worshipping god after god, going to a *Guru* and learning some *mantra* from him, placing an image of his choice in a corner of his house, but going on a pilgrimage to temple after temple,.....Forgetting the god at home, he worships another: the spirits of the dead ancestors, with the same devotion as his God on *Ekadashi* and serpents on *Nagapanchami*, *Durga* on the fourth of the dark fortnight; then *Navachandi* on another occasion and *Bhairava* on Sundays, the *linga* on Mondays, etc. He worships perpetually without being silent even for a moment, at various shrines; 'like a courtesan attracting man after man at the entrance to the town', the devotee who thus runs after different gods, he says is 'ignorance incarnate'. He knows the theory of *karma*, has

learnt the *Puranas* by rote, is a great astrologer, and can predict future events, knows the science of architecture and the art of cooking; has mastered the magic of the *Atharva-Veda*, his knowledge of sexual science is boundless; has studied the *Bharata*, attained proficiency in the *Agamas*; in ethics, medicine, poetics and dramaturgy there is none equal to him; he can discuss the *Smritis*, is well versed in the *Nighantu* and very profound in logic. 'He knows all these sciences, but is stark blind in the *Science of Self-knowledge.....The plumage of a peacock is covered all over with eyes; but there is no vision !*'

As a corrective, Dnaneshvar's prescription is significant. Fearlessness, Purity, Steadfastness, Sacrifice, are the virtues he inculcates in the order of their importance. Sacrifiee means dutifully offering to God whatsoever is best. Who can deny that, had the generation of Dnaneshvar and Ramdev Rao possessed these qualities, the fate of Maharashtra might have been different. The context of the *Gita*, the sermon of Sri Krishna to Arjuna, and its fulfilment in action,—all pointed to the same moral: *Dharma*. Dnaneshvar swept away much nonsense, stimulated clear thinking, and, more than anything else, filled the people with a purer faith and hope in redemption: 'Where the Moon is, there is moonlight; where fire exists, there is burning power: where Krishna is, there is victory.' Confidence in Him is the beginning of *Bhakti*: 'He punishes the wicked and destroys all sin; when Prahlad uttered His name, God ran to his rescue; His name is indeed the best and holiest of all things; it came to the succour of Dhruva, of Ajamila, of Gajendra, of Valmiki. Mountains of sin are destroyed in an instant by the name of God. There is neither season nor prescribed time for its utterance. The devotees of God feed themselves with the nectar of His Name.'

Such was the line of attack that Dnaneshvar adopted in order to purify, simplify, and popularise religion. That this renovated Faith proclaimed a revolt against the traditional ideas and practices will become more and more apparent as we proceed. 'We have discovered the secret: let us propagate the *Bhagavata-Dharma*; what use are pilgrimages while the mind still remains full of evil ?' asks Namadev who ushered in the *Democracy of Devotion*.

Namadev was a tailor, and Dnanadev the son of an outcaste Brahman. Others soon followed from all ranks and classes of people. As Ranade has pointed out, there were about fifty saints and prophets during this age: some of whom were women, a few converts from Islam, nearly half of them Brahmans, while in the remaining half there were Marathas, Kunbis, Mahars, goldsmiths, tailors, gardeners, potters, maidservants and repentant prostitutes. According to him, Dnaneshvar's influence was greater than that of any other saint except Tukaram. Namadev was Dnaneshvar's contemporary but outlived him by over fifty years (d. 1350). Others associated with them were Nivritti, Sopan and Muktabai,—the two brothers and a sister respectively of Dnanadev. To this cycle also belonged Gora the potter, Savata the gardener, Narahari the goldsmith, Choka the *Mahar*, Janabai the maidservant, Sena the barber, Kanhopatra the prostitute. Sena and Kanhopatra alone were separated from Namadev by about a century (c. 1448-68); all the rest were contemporaries. Together they constitute a fraternity of religious persons whose outlook and teachings are well reflected in the songs (*abhangs*)of Namadev. 'He developed the *sampradaya* of Pandhari as no other single saint ever did.'

Dnanadev and Namadev represented, respectively, the intellectual and the emotional aspects of the revival. The spirit of the teachings of both alike was to penetrate to the essence through the externals: 'A stone god and his mock devotee cannot satisfy each other. Such gods have been broken to pieces by the Turks, or have been flung into water,' says Nama, 'and yet they do not cry!' Is it not amazing, he asks, that people should discard the animate and worship the inanimate? 'They pluck a living *Tulasi* plant to worship a dead stone;...they kill a living ram to perform the Soma sacrifice; they paint a stone with red-lead, and women and children fall prostrate before it ..People worship a serpent made of clay, but take up cudgels to kill a living one.—All these are vain,' declares Nama: 'the only pursuit of value is to utter the Name of God.'

In the propagation of moral ideals, illustrated with Puranic examples, and the homely imagery used by them for popular enlightenment, we find the simple technique and

high character of the teachings of these saints. 'Contact with other women,' says Nama, 'is the sure cause of ruin: that way was Ravana destroyed and Bhasmasura reduced to ashes; that way the Moon became consumptive and Indra's body became punctured with a thousand holes.'

It is equally interesting to note that, according to Namadev the following combinations are hard to meet with; 'Gold and fragrance; diamond and softness; *a Yogin with purity*; *a rich man with compassion*; *a tiger with mercy*; *a hearer who is attentive*; *a preacher who knows*; and *a Kshatriya who is brave.*' What a bold commentary upon contemporary conditions!

Then we find him describing a saint as a 'spiritual washerman' who uses the 'soap of illumination'; 'he washes on the slab of tranquillity, purifies the river of knowledge, and takes away the spots of sin.' There is only one favour he would ask of God: 'that we should always feel Him in our heart, utter His name only with our tongue, see Him alone with our eyes. Our hands should worship Him only, our heads be placed at His feet alone, and our ears hear only His praise. He should show Himself on our right, our left, before us and behind, as well as at the close of our lives. We should ask of God no other favour except this.' The emotional effect of such ecstatic 'madness' upon the devoted masses cannot be imagined but felt in the company of the God-intoxicated.

'The value and significance of this movement,' observes Rev. Macnicol—a foreigner nurtured in another creed and culture—'lie in its affirmation of the claims of the human heart and in the moral and religious consequences that follow from that affirmation. These are the elements in it that gave it its power and enabled it to make an appeal so far-reaching and so profound. It was, if we may say so, a splendid effort of the Hindu soul to break the bondage under which it had lain so long. It at last stirred in its long sleep, and turned its drowsy eyes towards the dawn.' It is also to be noted that Macnicol opines: 'They have no language but a cry,' and their poems are 'primarily religious and only secondarily and accidentally works of art.' (*Psalms of the Maratha Saints*).

The religious capital of Maharashtra was, and still remains, Pandharpur:

On Bhima's banks all gladness is
In Pandhari the Abode of Bliss.

This is the refrain of many a song that is re-echoed by the choirs of singers that journey with eager expectation, year after year, to this Deccan village to look upon the face of the God, writes the Christian Missionary: 'There is little outwardly to distinguish the worship at this shrine from that of a hundred others throughout the land. The image is rudely fashioned and has no grace of form. The worship is that which is commonly performed in any Hindu temple. What gives it distinctive character is the special song services, the *kirtans* and *bhajans*, that are conducted for the instruction of pilgrims and *in which their deep religious emotion finds its fullest utterance.* Great numbers of pilgrims sit for hours at Pandharpur and the other village centres of the cult (like Dehu and Alandi), listening to the exhortations of some famous preacher or *Haridas* (lit. slave of God) who bases his discourse upon verses from such poet-saints as Dnanadev or Eknath or Tukaram. With the teaching is skilfully combined the singing of a choir. *These kirtans have a profound emotional effect upon the multitudes gathered in eager expectation at the holy place.* The songs of the old saints awaken, and in some degree satisfy, the deep desires of their hearts. So also groups will gather for what are called *bhajans*, when there is no preaching, but they continue often for hours, singing those songs of longing and ecstasy.' These foreign impressions, gathered from a modern setting, might serve to acquaint the reader with an echo (though necessarily faint) of the original thrills experienced by a people more attuned and sensitive to that kind of appeal than our present generation which is far removed from such devotional experiences.

How the spirit of the *Bhakti* movement permeated the masses and coloured their psychology may be gathered from the language used by some saints. We have already cited some *abhangs* of Namadev. The gardener Savata says, 'Garlic, Onion and Chilli are my God: the water-bag, the rope, and the well are all enveloped by Him... Well was it that I

was born in a low caste; and well is it also that I have not attained greatness. Had I been born a Brahman, my life would have been a mere round of rituals. Placed as I am, I have no ablutions to make, nor *Sandhya* to perform. Born in a low caste, I can only beg for 'Thy compassion.' Narahari, the goldsmith, makes his body the melting crucible of his soul, and pours the molten gold of God into the matrix of the three *gunas*. Hammer in hand he breaks to pieces anger and passion; and with the scissors of discrimination, cuts out the gold-leaf of the Name of God. With the balance of illumination he weighs God's Name. Bearing a sack of gold he crosses to the other side of the stream (of *Sansara*). Likewise, Chokha the untouchable saint says: 'The worshippers at the temple beat me for no fault of mine; they abuse me and charge me with having polluted God. I am indeed a dog at Thy door; send me not away to another.' Chokha is convinced that the real Pandhari is his own body; that his soul is the image of Vitthala therein, and tranquillity plays the role of Rukmini. 'Contemplating God in this wise I cling to the feet of God.' Chokha may be untouchable, he argues, 'but my heart is not untouchable: just as the sugarcane might be crooked, but the juice is not crooked.' He earnestly prays that if God should give him a son, he should be a saint; if a daughter, she shall be like Mirabai or Muktabai. 'If it should not please God to do any of these things, it is much better that He denies any offspring to Chokha.'

Turning to the barber Sena, we find him holding the mirror of discrimination, and using the pincers of dispassion: 'We apply the water of tranquillity to the head, and pull out the hair of egotism; we take away the nails of passion, and are a support to all the castes.' Kanhopatra, the fallen woman, cries: 'I am verily an outcaste: I do not know the rules of conduct: I only know how to approach Thee, in submission. Thou callest thyself the saviour of the fallen: Why dost Thou not then uplift me? I have once declared myself Thine; if others should claim me now, whose then would be the fault? If a jackal were to take away the food of a lion, who shall be blamed?' These appeals rose from the heart of Maharastra trodden under the heels of the *Mlencchas* for seve-

ral generations. The outcome was that, for five centuries, Maharashtra became the abode of 'that noblest and truest of democracies, the democracy of the *Bhaktas*.'

From the middle of the fifteenth century, we come across another cluster of saints: Bhanudas, Janardhanswami, and Ekanath. Their predecessors had carried ecstatic devotion to excess. It was time, therefore, to put a curb on extreme emotionalism. The balance between other-worldliness and the duties and obligations of this mundane life was held even by these three. We cannot say that they consciously argued like this, but their teachings as well as conduct indicate such harmonization.

Bhanudas was born at Paithan on the Godavari, about 1448. He is supposed to have brought back the image of Vitthala from Hampi (Vijayanagar) whither it had been removed for safety from Muslim hands. His disciple was Janardhanswami, the master of Eknath. Janardhan was *qile'dar* of Daulatabad till his death in 1575. He devoted himself to the service of God even while he was performing his worldly duties. He was a model for Ekanath in his combination of the worldly and spiritual life. He was respected alike by the Hindus and the Muslims. 'Every Thursday which was sacred to the God of Janardhanswami was proclaimed a holiday at Devagad by the order of the Mahomedan king.' His *samadhi* still exists inside a cave at Daulatabad. Ekanath lived with him for nearly six years. On one occasion he is said to have impersonated Janardhan and fought in defence of the fortress. Ekanath, all through his lifetime (1533-99), was noted for his industry and regularity. His patience and his equanimity were proverbial. His behaviour with a Muslim who spat on him every time he returned from his bath in the river, his redemption of a prostitute, his kindly treatment of an untouchable boy, and several other instances of his saintly behaviour revealed his practical spirituality.

Ekanath wrote works like *Bhavartha Ramayan* and edited the text of the *Dnaneshvari*. But his reputation chiefly rests on his great commentary on the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavata*,—the bible of *Bhagavata Dharma*. From the point of view of style the work of Ekanath is reckoned superior to that of Dnaneshvar. His vindication of Marathi as an adequate

vehicle of thought is familiar to most students of that language. If Sanskrit is to be regarded as the speech of the Gods, he declaims, is Prakrit to be considered the language of thieves? Let alone these errors of vanity, he declares, both are equally sacred when used for praising God. God is no partisan of one speech or another: 'My Marathi,' he proudly proclaims, 'is an excellent vehicle and is rich freighted with the fruits of divine thought.' His *Bhagavata*, indeed, amply illustrates the potentialities of that language. It covers every conceivable subject connected with Vedantic philosophy, with religion, with morality, etc. In the words of the late Rev. J. E. Abbott: 'Did he believe in knowledge as a way of salvation? Yes, but it must be without hypocrisy. Did he believe in *Bhakti* as a way of salvation? Yes, but it must mean true love of God, and sincere. Did he believe the Brahman held the first place in the social system? Yes, but a Brahman without true devotion to God would go to hell, and a Shudra with true devotion would be found in Heaven. Did he belive in Caste? Yes, but his firm conviction that God was in all men, Brahman or Shudra and even Mlenccha, made him, if the traditional stories of him can be believed, disregard, the rules of Caste when the needs of humanity demanded it.'

While the Ekanathi *Bhagavata* is replete with current social and religious philosophy, the same Christian critic observes, it is not a book for teaching those doctrines. 'It is rather the thought of sincerity, absence of hypocrisy, true love of God and man, moral ideas of truth and honesty, purity of life, sacredness of marriage, condemnation of immorality, selfishness, avarice, drunkenness, and other forms of vice, in all phases of life, that runs through the book and gives it its distinction....The work is too large, the subjects too varied, for any detailed analysis here. But it is in Marathi literature a unique book and worthy of study for its presentation of moral ideals, as they appealed to that great religious teacher to whom *the trueness of the inner spirit was more than any outer form.*'

After Ekanath we come to Tukaram and Ramdas, both of whom were contemporaries of Shivaji. The outlook of these great makers of the Maratha mind and spirit was even more

closely knit together, perhaps, than of Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi in the creation of modern Italy. We might almost say that Shivaji carved out by his sword an independent State in the Deccan in order to safeguard the spiritual culture summed up in Tukaram with the sagacity of Ramdas. Tukaram is still the most popular saint of Maharashtra. He is the summit and culmination of a long line of *Bhaktas*. In him the stream of devotion has swollen into a flood. His emotion is overpowering, his philosophy is reassuring, and his vehicle is the daily speech of the masses. 'Of all the Maratha *bhaktas*,' writes Macnicol, 'the greatest in the popular estimation, certainly the widest in the extent of his influence is Tukaram....The popularity of his verses has continued undiminished until today, and they are so widely known among all classes of Marathas that many of them have almost come to have the vogue and authority of proverbs. They are more familiar throughout Maharashtra than are (or were) in Scotland "the psalms of David or the song of Burns". Not only are they prized by the most illiterate worshipper of Vithoba as the *Veda* of their sect, but they furnish a large portion of the psalmody of the reforming Prarthana Samaj, while some of the greatest of modern Indians, such as M. G. Ranade and Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, have found in them, perhaps more than in the ancient scriptures, nourishment for their own religious life.'

For all this, Tuka, as Mahipati says, was not a learned man. He never went to school. His father taught him the little that he knew. He was not learned in Sanskrit. 'He must have found great difficulty in understanding the works of Dnanadev and Ekanath, in their antique Marathi forms, when he retired with his books to his mountain retreat, to read and study them,' observes Abbott. 'His caste as Shudra (*Vani*) was comparatively low, and no inspiration came to him from that source, nor from the Brahmans of his acquaintance, to whom he was accustomed to bow as Hindu social laws demanded. Tuka's growth was like the growth of a tree, from seed to full stature, on some retired spot, unassisted except by the laws of his own being. Forced at first by hard necessity he was a petty grocer in a little village, successful because of his natural ability and honesty; but his heart was not in

his business. He wanted God in his soul, and all earthly things, money and property, he counted as filth. Naturally he failed in business, and then came a period of readjustment to his now complete indifference to earthly things, and the unsympathetic attitude of his sharp tongued wife and scorning neighbours.' Despite these troubles, Mahipati describes him as 'helping the sick, carrying the burdens of the weary, giving water to the thirsty, food to the hungry, going on errands for the lame. Even animals came in for his kind thought. He watched for such as needed water or food. Even in this he met with no sympathy from his wife, and little from his neighbours. Tuka had to walk alone. His teacher was no other than the spirit within him'

Frequently as we have quoted the admiring Mr. Abbott already, the following appreciation by him of Tukaram's consummation as a Bhakta is both correct and irresistible: In the latter half of his life, "God is his all-in-all. God was his food and his drink. The world was nothing to him. God was his centre. His poetic inspiration came to him unexpectedly, but once in its grasp, he thought and spoke only in *abhangs*. No one taught him the art of poetry. His words flowed out of a heart full of love of God and goodwill to men.'

The saint himself proclaims: 'I know nothing, and what I am uttering are not my words, O ye saints. Be not angry with me, for God Panduranga speaks through me. He has filled every nook and corner in me. How else can an ignorant person like me declare what transcends even the *Vedas?* I only know how to sing the name of God; by the power of my *Guru*, God is bearing all my burdens.' 'Panduranga is my father and Rakhumai my mother. I am therefore of pure lineage from both my parents. I need no longer be poor in spirit or a pigmy in power. I shall no longer be wicked or unfortunate. God will ever come to my succour.' 'Who can deprive the son of the treasures of his father? I sit on the lap of God and there remain fearless and contented.' 'By the power of my faith God has made me a free master,' says Tuka. 'I distribute the harvest of God: all castes may come and partake of this bounty to their satisfaction.' He declares his mission to be to promote religion and to destroy

atheism. 'I take pointed words and fling them like arrows. I have no consideration of great and small.' 'Through various lives have I been doing this duty, to relieve the oppressed from the sorrows of existence. I shall sing the praises of God and gather together His saints. *I shall evoke tears even from stones. I shall sing the holy name of God and shall dance and clap my hands with joy. I shall plant my feet on the brow of death.* I shall imprison my passions and make myself the lord of the senses.' 'Pebbles will shine only so long as the diamond is not brought out. Torches will shine only so long as the sun has not risen. People will talk of other saints so long as they have not met Tuka.' 'I have come to illuminate the path and distinguish between the true and false.....Before me no tinsel can stand.' 'I have girded up my loins and have discovered for you the path across the ocean of life. *Come hither, come hither; come, great and small; men and women. Take no thought and have no anxiety. I shall carry you all to the other shore. I bear with me the certitude of God to carry you over in God's name.*'

Few could resist this call. For the masses, indeed, the voice of Tuka was the voice of God. It reverberated throughout Maharashtra and its echoes rolled from soul to soul. The message was not a political one, but only religious. Yet the people, once filled with that fervour, could never remain apathetic. Tukaram was undoubtedly a mystic, but the people were not mystical. Their mighty enthusiasm for religion could be easily directed into pragmatic channels. Ramdas was as much the instrument of this transformation as Shivaji. He converted the *Varkari* into the *Dharkari sampradaya*, as Rajwade puts it: the *sahishnu* psychology was revolutionised into the *jayishnu*. The *God of this virile cult is not the static Vithoba of Pandharpur, but the dynamic Maruti of Ramdas:* 'Hanuman is our supporter; Shri Raghunath is the God we worship. While our *Guru* is the powerful Shri Ram, what room is there for penury? When Raghunandan is our best benefactor, why should we go to others? Hence are we the slaves of Shri Ram; our faith is firmly set on him. Let the heavens fall, but we shall not think of any other.'

It is to be remembered that Hanuman is the Hercules of

Hindu mythology. His labours cleared the Augean Stables for Sri Ramachandra, the creator of *Rama-rajya:* the ideal *Svarajya* of the Hindus. In terms of Maratha history, we might describe Shivaji as a combination of Hanuman and Sri Ramachandra in the eyes of the masses. The emotional mysticism of Tukaram and the intellectual pragmatism of Ramdas must have been of considerable assistance to Shivaji in building up his great movement. He was certainly not writing on a blank page of History. The entire galaxy of saints had as much to do with the creation of a new Maratha society as Shivaji. The psychological and moral foundations had been well laid before Shivaji's military and political genius laid the coping stone. Maratha *Svaraijya* of the seventeenth century was not the work of a single man howsoever gifted. It was a mansion built by several hands directed by several brains. It was the natural product and culmination of the historical process which we have described in its various aspects in the present and preceding chapters.

It is futile to speculate on the exact share of each worker in this complex historical field. To attempt such an analysis is like trying to determine what proportion of soil and sunlight, wind and rain, have gone into the making of a huge banyan tree. The vital elements of historical evolution are incapable of accurate measurement and arithmetical apportionment. It is therefore vain to distribute the dividends among all the partners in the great business of nation-building. Both Shivaji and Ramdas were creators as well as participators in the new life that was surging through Maharashtra during the seventeenth century. That they were contemporaries working for a common cause is undeniable. The diary of their personal meetings and contacts is only of secondary importance.

The controversy regarding the personal contacts between Shivaji and Ramdas is thus clinched by Ranade. The earliest date assigned to their first meeting is 1649; the last is 1672. 'It is highly probable, that the earlier date is the more correct one: but we shall await some new discoveries for the final decision in the matter.' The letter attributed to Shivaji and dated in the fifth year of *Rajyabhisheka* is an illuminating document. In substance it reads as follows;—

'Obeisance to my noble Teacher (Ramdas), the father of all, the abode of bliss. Shivaji who is merely as dust on his Master's feet, places his head on the feet of his Master, and submits: I was greatly obliged to have been favoured by your supreme instruction, and to have been told that my religious duty consists in conquest, in the establishment of *Dharma*, in the service of God and the Brahmans, in the amelioration of my subjects, and in their protection and succour. I have been advised that herein is spiritual satisfaction for me. You were also pleased to declare that whatever I should earnestly desire would be fulfilled. Consequently, through your grace, have I accomplished the destruction of the Turks and built at great expense fastnesses for the protection and perpetuation of my kingdom. Whatever kingdom I have acquired I have placed at your feet and dedicated myself to your service. I desired to enjoy your close company, for which I built the temple at Chaphal and arranged for its upkeep and worship, etc....Then when I again desired to make over 121 villages to the temple at Chaphal, and also intended to grant eleven *vitas* of land to every place of worship, you said that all this could be done in due course. Consequently, I have assigned the following lands for the service of God ... I promise to make available, at the time of the annual festival, all the corn from these lands.'— Dated *Rajyabhisheka shaka 5* Asvin Suddha 10 (= *Shaka* 1600 or 1678 A.D.).

Competent critics have considered 'activism' the most characteristic feature of the teachings of Ramdas. 'Ramdas, more than any other saint of Maharashtra, called people's minds to the performance of Duty, while the heart was to be set on God... No wonder that with this teaching he helped the formation of the Maratha kingdom, as no other saint had done before.' (Ranade). His *Das Bodha* is supposed to contain the political testament of Ramdas. Particularly does he declare therein: 'The *Mlencchas* have long been rampant in the country and it is necessary to be very vigilant... The goddess Tulaja Bhavani is indeed benignly interested; but it is necessary to be circumspect in action.' Addressing the goddess at Pratapgad, Ramdas implores, 'I ask only one thing of Thee, my Mother: Promote the cause of the King in our very life-

time. I have heard of Thy exploits in the past; but show Thy power today.' His vision of the Kingdom of Bliss, wherein 'the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest', is described in his *Anandavana Bhuvana*: 'A great calamity has overtaken the *Mlencchas*; God has become the Protector of the virtuous; all evil-doers have come to an end. Hindusthan has grown strong; haters of God have been slain, the power of the *Mlencchas* has vanished. The Mother has blessed Shivaji and destroyed the sinner. I see the Goddess in the company of the king, intent on devouring the wicked. She protected Her devotees of old; She is protecting them today-in the Kingdom of Bliss.'

To prepare for this consummation, Ramdas preached in the living present: 'Places of pilgrimage have been destroyed homes of the Brahmans have been desecrated, the whole earth is agitated; *Dharma* is gone. Therefore, Marathas should be mobilized; *Maharashtra Dharma* should be propagated. The people should be rallied and filled with a singleness of purpose; sparing no effort, we should crash upon the *Mlencchas*.' Torn from their context these exhortations might sound fanatical. But, from what we have recorded in the preceding pages, the religious revival had reached a stage where it was bound to become militant. Even the patient and forbearing Ekanath wrote: 'Wicked kings began to rule, and they exploited their subjects like thieves. Themselves worse than Shudras they converted people of all castes. Such being the condition (most sinful and sacrilegious) Brahmans gave up studying the scriptures; they became drunkards, served the ignominious, and fed themselves like dogs...on the leavings from the Turks' table.' Ramdas, to be fair to him, also recommended moderation; 'Extremes should be always avoided, one should act according to situations. The wise should never be fanatical.. Times change, rigid rules do not always help; in politics theoretical consistency is misleading.'

The saints taught by example as well as by precept. On the whole, their total influence was in the direction of evoking great fervour for religion, yet restraining that zeal by a moderation which has always characterized Hindu social behaviour. The revivalism was creative and constructive, not violent and destructive. 'The impulse was felt,' as Ranade observed,

'in art, in religion, in the growth of vernacular literature, in communal freedom of life, in the increase of self-reliance and toleration.' In spirit, this renaissance was also fed from another source, namely, Vijayanagar. Particularly was that great kingdom (destroyed just a century before the death of Shahji, as we have seen) the repository of the best traditions of Hindu rule and culture. Particularly, in the matter of religious toleration, not less than as a shining exmple of what Hindu organisation could achieve, the Marathas had an inspiring model in the "never-to-be forgotten Empire" of the south.

The specific channels through which this inspiration worked must remain a controversial subject. On the religious side we have the significant tradition of the removal of the image of Vithala (to save it from Muslim desecration) to Vijayanagar, and its restoration to Pandharpur by Bhanudas(d.1513). The Marathi poet Mahipati has described this historic incident in his *Bhakta-vijaya* (composed, 1762) which evidently records a well-established tradition. It is to be remembered that the initial consecration of Vithoba at Pandhari is attributed to Pundalika—a saint equally respected by the people of Maharashtra and Karnatak. The service rendered by a Karnatak king through the protection and restoration of Vithala, the most popular God of Maharashtra, was bound to make a deep and abiding impression upon a people who were now passionately devoted to the Pandharpur cult. In the verses of Mahipati we witness the sentiments of the Marathas regarding their favourite God: While Vithoba was away from Pandhari, 'the city was like a body without life, or a river without water. The city was oppressed with fears. It was like an army without a king, like constellations without the moon, or as a virtuous devoted wife deprived of her husband (unprotected among men). So with Hari gone to Vijayanagar the whole of Pandhari seemed desolate. Dejected, the saints and *mahants* sat down by the Eagle-platform. 'Whose praises shall we now sing ?' they asked among themselves. 'The *Life of the world* has deserted us. The promise given to Pundalik (to stick to Pandhari) has been broken.'

The rejoicing at the return of Vithoba was commensurate with the sorrow in his absence. 'And now the assembled

crowd of men and women praised Bhanudas, saying that it was through him that the *Lord of Heaven* had come back to Pandhari. Some distributed sweetmeats throughout the city. Others gave feasts of daintily cooked food to Brahmans. Thus all the dwellers of that sacred city rejoiced in their hearts. Just as when the sun of Raghu came back to Ayodhya, after enduring fourteen years of exile, the people of the city rejoiced, so did the people of Pandhari also rejoice. As when a mountain becomes dry in the time of drought, and then a cloud pours abundant rain upon it, so did the people of Pandhari feel relieved. It was like the joy of the clouds as they saw the ocean issuing from Agasti; it was like the beauty of vegetation when Spring appears: so was the return of the *Protector of the Helpless* to Pandhari. All the inhabitants became happy: It was as when life returns to the body and all the senses are quickened and begin to perform their functions. So it happened to all the people of Pandhari.'

This event beautifully symbolises the return of life to the dead limbs of Hindu society. Out of the very ashes of Vijayanagar a spark was conveyed to Maharashtra which added to the illumination created by the saints. The protection of Vithala was the protection of Hindu *Dharma* and civilization, as it was lived and understood by those generations. His restoration therefore was the restoration of *Dharma* which brought about a great and enthusiastic revival. Vijayanagar had stood like a rock against the waves of Islamic advance for over two centuries. While protecting all that Hindu civilization meant, and fighting valiantly against the forces of Muslim aggression, Vijayanagar had throughout continued to be tolerant towards the Muslims individually. This tradition was not extinguished at Talikota or Rakkastangadi, but transmitted to Maharashtra through innumerable channels.

Professor T. S. Shejwalkar has discussed some of these in his article on 'What Shivaji and the Maratha State owed to Vijayanagara' (in the *Vijayanagara Sexcentenary Commemoration Volume*). He has pointed out therein how the author of *Maharashtra Mahodayacha Purvaranga* (lit. Dawn of the Great Awakening of Maharashtra), dealing with the period 1300–1600 A.D., unavoidably found himself writing a history of Vijayanagar. The family *bakhars* of the Brahman Sar-

desais of Sangameshvar, he says, show how they were supported by the Vijayanagar kings, and thinks that their title of *Nayak* must have been derived from Vijayanagar. 'The cultural influence of Vijayanagar,' according to him, 'is found mentioned in a curious manner; when after the terrible Durgadevi famine at the end of the 14th century, the whole of Maharashtra was depopulated for thirty years, a certain Brahmin, Dado Narasinh by name, of *Atharva Veda* and *Bhalanjana Gotra*, came from Vijayanagara to Karad, and, with the permission of the Padshah of Bedar, helped in the reconstruction and repopulation of the land.' Prof. Shejwalkar is also of opinion that Shivaji, who was at Bangalore as a boy until 1642, must have imbibed at his father's court some of the surviving traditions of Vijayanagar, as evidenced by the *Shiva Bharat* and *Radha-Madhava-Vilasa Champu.* 'We can take it almost for certain,' he states, 'that Shivaji's mind had become full of tales of Vijayanagar, of the exploits of its heroes, and the cultural work of its learned men like Vidyaranya. The fame of 'Rama Raja Kanada' and the historic battle of 'Rakshastagdi' had spread far and wide in Maharashtra as we can judge by the existence of Marathi *Bakhars* on the subject and the casual mention of his name elsewhere....Subjectively speaking, it seems clear to us that Shivaji's ideal was formed in the shadow of Vijayanagar.' Finally, he concludes. 'Because Shivaji wished to stand forth as a successor of Vijayanagar, he selected as his imperial coin the gold *hona* in imitation of Vijayanagar, and did not copy the *rupee* of the Mughals though it was becoming the current coin of India as a whole then. For the same reason he continued the practice of donating villages and cash from the treasury to learned Brahmins and to shrines of Hindu deities on the Madras coast. A number of the grant papers have been published in Marathi from the Peshwa State Records by Parasnis and Mavji. His grant, indited on silverplate, to Tirumalaraya and Ramaraya, the two sons of Sri Ranga Rayulu, the last nominal emperor of Vijayanagar, who died a fugitive in the west country (probably Bednur), though in its present form spurious, still appears to be, as remarked by Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, correct in substance from the sentiments expressed therein.'

Before we close this chapter, it is necessary to explain the work of Shahji in Karnatak which has been characterised by one writer as 'all along unfriendly though he was a Hindu'. Mr. D. B. Diskalkar has observed, 'He was no doubt the greatest Hindu general in those days whose help could have saved Vijayanagara for some more years.... If Shahji had left the cause of Bijapur and had taken up that of Vijayanagara the history of the Karnataka could have taken a different turn. The foundation of the Maratha power in the south which he laid by his Bijapur service could as well have been lain by the Vijayanagara service.' (*Vij. Com. Vol.*)

It indeed seems a pity that the historical process does not consult future wisdom. Our regrets that things might have been different from what they were actually reveal our sentiments instead of elucidating History.

> 'The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils Himself in many ways.'

The collapse of the Vijayanagar empire clearly showed its military weakness. It had not enough political stamina to resuscitate itself. The unhealthy state of things during the last century of its shadowy existence (1565-1664) revealed the incapacity of the south to sustain Hindu civilisation. It was an epoch of self-seeking adventurers. In that *milieu* 'to scrap the sorry scheme of things' and reshape it to a new pattern was not the work of individual men but of Destiny. Shahji was as much an instrument in the hands of that 'Divinity which shapes our ends' as Shivaji. The emergence of a New Order necessarily involves the destruction of the old. Not all who participate in the processes of History act as conscious agents. Most men are like mere pebbles in the stream of life; but some stand out as boulders and even shape the currents of history. Shahji was a builder unaware of the magnitude of his own contributions towards the rise of the Maratha power. He succeeded because Bijapur was behind him; otherwise he might have died like Tirumala or Sri Ranga. Vijayanagar could not be resurrected. If Hindu civilization was to survive, a new *avatar* was needed. He appeared in the person of Shivaji.

CHAPTER VII

THE GRAND STRATEGIST

'Report hath made him an airy body and adds wings, or else it were impossible hee could bee at soe many places as hee is said to bee at all at one time. Hee is very nimble and active imposing strange labour upon himself that hee may endure hardship, and also exercises his chiefest men that hee flies to and fro with incredible dexterity'—*English Factory Record*, 1664.

THE life and doings of Shivaji have been minutely and critically studied by scholars in and outside Maharashtra for more than a century since Grant Duff wrote his *History of the Mahrattas*. Still we are no nearer a correct understanding of the various details of his crowded career today than were his earliest historians or biographers. 'It is impossible to come to any universal agreement,' writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, 'on questions like,–Where did Shivaji spend the years 1637 and 1638, at Puna or Bijapur? Was it Dadaji Kond-dev or Shivaji who subjugated the Mavals? When did Dadaji die? What was the first Bijapuri fort taken by Shivaji and in what year? In what year or years did he establish his own authority over those forts of his father which had not been at first placed under him? What were the order and dates of his acquisition of the 40 forts of which he was admittedly in possession in 1659?' This questionnaire might be expanded almost without limit, according to the objectives held in view by the researcher. For the biographer of Shivaji such minutiæ may be of insatiable interest.* But, for our purpose, the character and outlook of Shivaji are of greater importance and significance than even the details of his horoscope or the ethnology of his lineage. In the light of the place we have given to individuals in the preceding chapters, we should concentrate more on the

* The latest available biography defining some of these points is that by Shri D. V. Kale in Marathi; 'छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज' (Poona University, 1960).

historical than biographical aspects of even this greatest of the makers of Maratha nationhood.

It is to be admitted, however, that though Shivaji could be considered in one sense as a product of his age, the dynamics of his great personality in their turn moulded and reshaped the destiny of the people and country. So powerful was this factor that most writers have attributed, it seems to us, rather too much to his individual genius. Without seeking to underrate this vital and almost decisive element, we should emphasize that Shivaji did not inherit a clean slate and he did not work in a vacuum. He had to rub out and rewrite much, but he had also to adjust his sails to the contemporary winds. Though he was a master-craftsman endowed with extraordinary talents, his tools were mostly old and his co-adjutors were not a negligible factor. The resultant of the total historical process provided him a congenial atmosphere which enabled his genius to bear abundant fruit. The soil indeed had been prepared and watered by the pioneers and saints. Shivaji did the final ploughing and seed-throwing. The farmer was a creature of the soil; the seed was indigenous; and so were the bullocks and the plough. Finally, the harvest is never the product of any single person's labour: so also was the Maratha creation.

That Shivaji's success was due to his qualities of leadership is quite obvious. The absence of those qualities in the Yadavas, as well as the apathy of the people of Maharashtra in those days, had made for the collapse of Hindu power then. Now there was leadership with extraordinary vision combined with equal capacity for initiative and organisation; now the people were awakened and ready to respond; and all the opportunities that time, place, and circumstances could afford were available also. The result, however, did not depend upon these merely; there were, too, formidable odds to be reckoned with. When Ala-u'd-Din started his aggressions the whole peninsula, though politically split up, was Hindu. Now there were the Muslim kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkonda. The first of these was indeed dissolved while Shivaji was still a boy of six years, but its place had been taken by the more powerful and dangerous Mughal empire. To emerge successfully out of this situation requir-

ed courage as well as dexterity. Shivaji had not the inherited resources of a long established kingdom like that of the Yadavas. Like Sher Shah Sur he had to build them up from a mere *jagir*. Bricks and mortar and even artisans alone, however, cannot build a magnificent and enduring structure; it requires the genius of an architect to achieve amazing results. Marble was available for long ages before the Taj Mahal was created; and the huge rock out of which the temple of Kailas was hewn existed before this marvel was accomplished. Shivaji was a titanic creator in the realm of politics and nation-building. He had the vision of Mazzini, the dash of Garibaldi, the diplomacy of Cavour, and the patriotism, perseverance, and intrepidity of William of Orange. He did for Maharashtra what Frederick the Great achieved for Germany or Alexander the Great for Macedonia. In India, later, Ranjit Singh, the Lion of the Punjab, affords a striking parallel. Still in several respects Shivaji stands alone and unique.

It has been observed that, in ancient Greece, the history of the rise and fall of Thebes was no more than the biography of Epaminondas. Some have regarded the rise of the Maratha State as almost a similar phenomenon; but historical analogies are superficial, lame, and misleading. Shivaji's achievement was greater, richer, and more enduring. We propose to deal with it in this and the following three chapters.

To begin with, the amazing success that Shivaji won in the course of his relatively short span of life, cannot be explained satisfactorily except in terms of his military talents. His political ideal could not have been accomplished without his military genius. He had to create and equip the armies with which he had to fight; he had to fix for them a goal, fire them with a zeal, and lead them from victory to victory so as to galvanize a whole people with a sense of national triumph. Progressively, as we shall witness, this was not purely a military achievement. Diplomatic skill, political manoeuvring and creative statesmanship had all to be brought into focus for the total result. Otherwise Shivaji would have remained a mere war-lord, a futile and aimless adventurer. He has been spoken of as a 'Grand Rebel,' but this is too negative and incomplete an epithet to describe him adequately. He was a strategist—a Grand Strategist—by which he

accomplished his positive ends. These aims he summed up in the noble word '*Svarajya*' which was to be enjoyed under the protecting authority of the '*Chhatrapati*'. This was the legacy he wished to leave to posterity: his own progeny and his people. But this grand strategy was empirically evolved and rested on his patrimony, his early training, and opportunities. It grew with his life and developed with his experience. What follows, therefore, must inevitably constitute a historical biography or an account of how Shivaji made history for his country with the help of his people, during the seventeenth century.

There is no unanimity among scholars about the exact date of his birth. Sir Jadunath Sarkar accepted 10 April 1627 on the authority of Chitnis whose account was written as late as c.1810 A.D. 19 February 1630 is the date recorded in the Jedhe *Sakavali*, a work of undoubtedly earlier origin. We have already stated that Shivaji was born of Shahji and Jijabai both of whom traced their lineage from ancient royal families. The place of his birth was Shivneri, a fortress which still contains monuments commemorating that event. The circumstances attending his nativity, infancy and early life are worthy of recapitulation for the light they throw upon his psychology. His father led an extremely unsettled and hunted life. His mother too was much exposed to the dangers and vicissitudes of her husband's fortunes. There were narrow escapes and thrilling episodes in the fugitive family. When Shivaji was still in the embryo, his mother had been shocked by the cold blooded butchery of her father, two brothers and nephew in the Nizamshahi (25 July 1629). In 1633 Jijabai had very nearly been captured by Mhaldar Khan, the *qile'dar* of Trimbak. In 1636 Shahji was besieged together with his family in the fortress of Mahuli, and might well have been either slaughtered or imprisoned for life. Thereafter the little boy and his long-suffering mother, except for short intervals perhaps, lived mostly on the Poona *jagir*, while Shahji was in the Karnatak along with his eldest son Sambhaji, and his second wife Tukabai Mohite. The death of Sambhaji in action at Kanakgiri (*c.* 1655) left Jijabai alone with Shivaji to engross her affections. She thus lived for the most part with her gifted son to guide and inspire him in

all the trying moments of his life. She died in 1674 a few days after Shivaji's coronation at Raigad. She was his real and living Bhavani.

It is more difficult to assess the direct influence of Shahji upon Shivaji. But from what little we know, we cannot agree with those who imagine that he neglected his first family at Poona. The ground on which this opinion is based is too fictitious to be convincing. On the contrary, we have evidence to believe that there was no alienation in sentiment or purpose between Shahji at Bangalore and Jijabai and Shivaji in Poona. According to Sabhasad, they were living together at Bangalore until Shivaji was twelve years of age. Then, even if we should skip over the highly dramatised accounts of Shivaji's early visit to Bijapur, as given in the *Shiva Digvijaya* and Chitnis *Bakhars*, there are more sober references in them which may not be doubted. For instance, the loyal father in Bijapur service is reported to have written to his adventurous son remonstrating against his disloyal conduct (towards the 'Adil Shah) in terms which sound quite plausible and natural: 'I have to stay at the Court; you are my son, and yet you are plundering treasures and capturing forts without pausing to think that it will compromise me. (Its only result will be) the Badshah's displeasure and the loss of all we have. What I have earned is for you. You should maintain and gradually increase it. It is your duty to keep secure what my service has procured for me in my old age.' Despite the political divergence in outlook at that stage, revealed by this letter, the family affection of Shahji towards Shivaji is too transparent to be questioned. Likewise, Jijabai is stated to have advised Shivaji: 'What property your father has, he has earned for you. Do what may secure future good. That will please your father; do not entertain any doubt about it.' We would only add to this that, when Shahji was imprisoned in 1648-49, Shivaji gave up Kondana as that was one of the conditions of his liberation. He also appears to have carried on negotiations with prince Murad to secure the same purpose. The Jedhe entry on Shahji's release, quoted earlier, also throws unmistakable light on the degree of Shahji's interest in his son's security and progress. The alleged apathy between father and son, therefore, finds little support

in the evidence at our disposal. If anything, as years passed they understood each other better, and perhaps also appreciated each other's achievements in their respective spheres. Ultimately, the work of both, following seemingly divergent lines, proved equally fruitful in the creation of an independent Maratha dominion.

In the purely political sphere, the most direct instrument of Shivaji's instruction in the formative years of his life, was Dadaji Kond-dev. He was Shahji's Brahman steward on the Poona *jagir*, and became Shivaji's tutor and mentor from 1642-47. Sabhasad speaks of him as 'the intelligent and shrewd Dadaji Kond-dev,' and according to Chitnis: 'Shivaji Maharaj lived in the province of Puna and was educated by Dadaji Pant. He was taught the arts of wrestling and throwing missiles.' From all accounts, Dadaji appears to have been a very conscientious and capable administrator. On coming to Poona he took possession of the 12 Mavals, says Sabhasad. 'The Maval Deshmukhs were siezed and taken in hand; the refractory among them were put to death. Then, in course of time, Dadaji died.' Shivaji thereafter managed his own affairs. The nature of the relations and activities of the Bhosles and their steward is revealed by a letter of Muhammad Adil Shah to Kanhoji Jedhé, dated 1 Aug. 1644. As Shahji Bhosle, it states, has become a rebel and Dadaji, his supreme agent, is campaigning in the region of Kondana, Khandoji and Baji Khopde have been deputed to suppress him, along with 'our grand ministers.' Kanhoji Jedhe too is asked to co-operate with the Adilshahi officers in return for which he is promised elevation. It closes with the remarks, 'Know this to be urgent.' We shall see later on how the Jedhes, far from acting as the agents of the Adil Shah in suppressing the rebellious activities of the Bhosles, joined with them in the work of Maratha independence. From this point of view it is significant to remember that Kanhoji Nayak Jedhe and his *karbhari* Dadaji Krishna Lohokare were imprisoned in 1648 and released in 1649 along with Shahji.

Other coadjutors of Shivaji in these early years will come in for notice in due course. But the names of Yesaji Kank, Baji Pasalkar, and Tanaji Malusare appear prominently among them. Could this band of young dare-devils have con-

ceived of the noble ideals which Shivaji formulated explicitly in his maturer years? Despite the precocious sentiments put into the mouth of the young hero by the *Bakhar* writers, we would rather not anticipate his idealism. At this stage, to begin with, they were a group of fiery young men, ambitious to achieve something, tugging at the leash, straining to go forward, bursting into adventures for their own sake, and inebriated with success. But increasingly, gathering experience under the gifted leadership of Shivaji they found their opportunities ever widening. The sober and consummate guidance of Dadaji Kond-dev (until 1647) and the patriotic and powerful inspiration of Jijabai gave direction and meaning to their juvenile escapades.

History proceeds from the concrete to the abstract, from particulars to the general, and palpable human facts are the best incentive which move men to idealistic conduct. The atmosphere indeed must have been rife with stories of the misdoings of the Muslims: the declared policy of Muhammad Adil Shah (as stated in the *Muhammad-Nama*) was 'to strengthen and glorify the Islamic religion in the dominion of the Hindus.' The technique of the execution of this policy was well-known: the desecration of Hindu places of worship and the conversion of the Hindus. Though Hindus served under the Muslims, the price they had to pay was often too heavy. The massacre of the Jadhavs (Lukhji and his sons and nephew), the murder of Kheloji Bhosle and the conversion of Bajaji Nimbalkar were instances to provoke reprisals even as family vendetta. Numerous other such provocations must have been felt by the Hindus all over the Adilshahi dominions. Ramdas preached his philosophy of 'direct action' in such a society. No wonder that inflammable material, such as the Shivaji group provided, caught immediate fire. Like the Carbonari and the young men of Italy under the fiery inspiration of Mazzini, the spirited youths of the Mavals formed a revolutionary body ready for any sacrifice. It is to be remembered that Shivaji was 18-19 years of age when his father Shahji was imprisoned, then released. Think of its effect upon Jijabai, upon Shivaji and upon the Jedhes and Lohokares. Earlier, too, suppressive measures were taken against Dadaji Kond-dev for insurrectionary acti-

vites in the region of Kondana. Shivaji and his band of young followers—whether they were Kshatriyas or Marathas—were not tame cultivators but gallant fighters. They captured forts, looted government treasures, and may be even destroyed a mosque. They belonged to a people of whom Yuan Chwang had remarked: 'They are proud, spirited, and warlike, grateful for favours, and revengeful for wrongs, self-sacrificing towards suppliants in distress, and sanguinary to death with any who treated them insultingly.'

Opportunities were provided by the very situation, geographical constitution, and the administrative looseness of the regions which nursed these people in an atmosphere of freedom. Politically speaking, it is helpful to note (*i*) that the Nizamshahi was dissolved in 1636; (*ii*) that this was preceded and followed by unavoidable anarchy, particularly in the tracts now covered by the Poona, Thana, Kolaba and Nasik districts: (*iii*) that the Adil Shah's forces were pre-occupied with the Karnatak campaigns thereafter; and (*iv*) that Shahji's Poona *jagir* (comprising the land enclosed between the Ghod river in the north, the Nira in the south and the Bhima in the east, stretching over the Ghats and the Mavals into the Konkan in the west), though nominally a fief under Bijapur, was virtually independent. Apart from the general laxity of feudal administration, the last ten years of Muhammad Adil Shah's reign were marked by his prolonged illness (1646-56) and court intrigues of a deadly nature. 'The hill forts under all the Mahomedan governments,' writes Grant Duff, 'were generally much neglected.' Some of the more important strongholds were no doubt garrisoned by the State, but in times of need (like the Karnatak campaigns) the best troops were removed. Ordinarily, most of the forts were entrusted to the *mokasadars*, the *amildars*, the *jagirdars* or the *deshmukhs* of the districts wherein they were situated. 'There was no hill-fort in Shahji's Jagheer committed to the care of Dadajee Kond-dev. The strong fort of Kondanah and a Mahomedan Killidar; and Poorundhur was under charge of a Brahmin appointed by Morar Punt. Shahji's family were on terms of intimacy with both the Killidars, particularly Neelkunt Rao of Poorundhur, who was originally under the Nizam Shahee government and had adhered to Shahjee.'

What with constant war-activities and famine (such as the terible one which devastated the Deccan in (1630-31) and the chaos which followed in their wake, the land had become a prey to robbers and wild beasts. The *Tarikh-i-Shivaji* cites the instance of a revenue officer under Ahmadnagar, named Moro Tandev, who 'raised a tumult and seized the neighourhood of Poona,' during this period. The whole region up to Wai and Shirwal was devastated and unsafe. It was in the reduction of this state of things that Dadaji Kond-dev rendered the greatest service. His strong and efficient administration cleared the Augean Stables for Shivaji, as well as set a constructive model for him. The Maval country, as Sarkar well observed, was the cradle of Shivaji's power and the Maval people formed the backbone of his army. The prevailing system of administration left a free hand to the local chiefs and officers. The *Deshmukh* was no more than the king's local agent for the collection of revenus through the village *Patils*. They were granted, in return for this service, some commission and rent-free lands. The king was interested in nothing beyond receiving the stipulated revenue. The actual administrative work was done by Brahman stewards or *karbharis*, like Dadaji Kond-dev, assisted by a Kayastha Prabhu staff. The Maratha Deshmukhs and Jagirdars had enough leisure to play the role of petty *rajas* indulging in hunting and martial exercises. The mass of the people were Kunbi farmers or Koli fishermen who provided excellent material for the army or the feudal militia. It is said of Guru Govind Singh that he fashioned hawks out of sparrows and lions out of foxes. Shivaji likewise converted the Maval yeomanry into ironsides for the achievement of Maratha freedom and the creation of a Maratha State.

The people but reflect the character of their land. No elaborate natural or geographical description is called for here. But the most impressive features cannot be missed by any observer of these homelands of the Marathas: the main Sahyadri range forming the backbone or the country, with the Deccan plateau or Desh in the east, and the Konkan coastal strip in the west. The arid plains above and the alluvial plains below the Ghats are nothing peculiar, except that they provided free access to raids from the hardy mountaineers who lived in the middle.

The soil in the Konkan is productive and the rainfall even heavy at places. The coast is broken with inlets and creeks which afford havens for country-craft to encourage some sea-borne trade. Ports like Bassein, Bombay, Chaul, Dabul, Ratnagiri, Rajapur, Vingurla, Goa, and Karwar, attracted even foreign shipping. The tussle for their possession soon brought into extstence a chain of coastal fortresses like Janjira, Suvarnadurg, Vijayadurg, Sindhudurg, etc. The part played by these in Maratha history will appear in the due course. The Konkan became the bone of contention between the Muslims, the Marathas and the European powers.

The Maval country comprises the habitable portions of the mountain region, with its terraced hills and hollows where even today one sees hamlets nestling in the beautiful valleys as he descends from the Ghats. The soil yields to hard labour a scanty subsistence which does not keep the Maval peasantry out of want. Higher up, the steep hill-sides are covered with thick forests inhabited by wild beasts and mountain tribes. The climate and the surrondings both impart to the denisons of the valleys and Ghat-matha (summit) a sturdiness, vigour and simplicity of living which have constituted the greatest military assets of Maharashtra. This was the habitat of the 'mountain rats' that became the greatest source of danger to the Muslim powers which had hitherto enjoyed such 'plain'-sailing over the vast stretches of the Deccan Trap.

The strength of the Marathas lay in their forts and mountains. The Koli Nag Nak and the Shirkes of Khelna demonstrated it in the time of Muhammad Tughlaq and the Bahamanis. So also did the valiant Mukund Rao take advantage of the hills and defied Yusuf Adil Shah with the help of his peasant army. Shivaji was but following in their wake, and making large-scale application of their solitary experiments. As the author of the *Adnapatra* strikingly puts it: "*Durga* is the very essence of the State; *Gad* and *Kot* constitute the kingdom, they are its foundation; its treasure. They are the strength of the army; and the prosperity of the realm.' Not only the Kingdom, but the entire culture of Maharashtra in those times, observes Prof. S. N. Banhatti, was fort-centred and hill-based. Hence Shivaji and Ramdas, he

says, laid the foundations of Maratha *Svarajya* seeking support from the mountains.

The twelve Mavals which Dadaji Kond-dev is said to have taken possession of when he returned with the boy Shivaji from Bangalore (c. 1642), formed the nucleus round which the Maratha enterprise commenced. Shivaji was a strategist and, like Sher Shah, never scrupled about the means where the ends were considered of vital importance. We shall discuss this issue independently elsewhere. But we would caution the reader here against exaggerating its implications or applying it unfairly to all his actions and in all the stages of his career. Shivaji was not a saint like Ramdas or Tukaram. He was not acting in a purely spiritual or moral sphere. Political and military actions are to be judged in history, in the first instance, by canons other than purely ethical. Reserving ethical judgment, therefore, for ultimate evaluation at the end, we shall examine each instance of his public conduct as history discloses it to our vision. Suspending the moral verdict we must concentrate, for the time being, on the historicity of the details. When the authenticity of each fact is ascertained and established beyond doubt, or the evidence is verified, the verdict may not be shirked. To start with, therefore, Shivaji for us is neither saint nor sinner, but just *human*: impelled by *human* motives to achieve *human* ends in a *human* world,—we must also add, of the seventeenth century.

Since our purpose is not to give an exhaustive biography of Shivaji,* we can find space here only for the most typical and decisive illustrations. The earliest instance of what we might describe as his pragmatic conduct, or stratagem, was his capture of the treasures belonging to his uncle, Sambhaji Mohite, in Supa *mahal* (1649). Sabhasad's account of this incident lacks details. But Dr. Balkrishna finds in it the young ruler's determination to set an example of firm rule to all his subordinates by thus sternly dealing with his own uncle. The point, however, is not the motive of the action but its method. The method lay in concealing the real motive. Sambhaji was the brother of Tukabai Mohite, the

* For this see D. V. Kale, *op. cit.*

second wife of Shahji, He held charge of Supa directly from his brother-in-law and was not inclined to submit to young Shivaji. The latter therefore circumvented him by a stratagem. Pretending to visit him on account of *Simga* he caught hold of his estate.

Next, at Purandhar (c. 1650), Shivaji's interference was invited by a dispute between Nilkanth Nayak (the keeper of the fort) and his two younger brothers. Shivaji made use of the opportunity to imprison all the three and occupied the fort in force with his Mavales. The fort belonged to Bijapur; now he made it his own.

These two instances show that Shivaji was bent upon making himself master over all his surroundings. Sher Shah had used similar methods at Chunar and Rohtas, and even the great Akbar did not scruple to capture Asirgarh finally through bribery. Chakan, Torna, and Rajgad came into Shivaji's possession through voluntary submission or persuasion or force. The last named place was further strengthened and used by Shivaji as his capital until it was superseded by the more famous Raigad. Kondana was secured by bribing Siddi Ambar, its Bijapuri commandant. It is difficult to date these acquisitions accurately; but their importance lies more in the total and increasing power they brought to Shivaji than in the sequence of their annexation. Indapur and Baramati on the eastern side of his *jagir* appear to have peacefully submitted to Shivaji. Obviously his power was becoming irresistible for the smaller fry by about 1649. He had begun to alarm the Adil Shah's government, which accounts for its insistence on the surrender of Kondana as the price of his father's freedom. That he did not yield without a struggle is indicated by circumstantial evidence. There appears to have been some fighting between Shivaji's men and the Bijapur forces in the vicinity of Purandar.

From this minor incident, we must now turn to the major events of his life. The circumstances attending his capture of Javli from the Mores (January 1656) and his killing of the great Bijapuri general Afzal Khan (November 1659) are among the most controversial topics connected with Shivaji's earlier triumphs. Both are of critical importance in forming our judgment about him, and call for the most careful examination.

The Mores of Javli were vassals of the Adil Shahs for eight generations. Their first ancestor to occupy that place had rendered great service to Bijapur in establishing its hold upon that wild tract. In recognition of this, his name 'Chandra Rao' was proudly borne by every successor to the Javli fief. But the direct line of succession having failed in the eighth generation, the last chieftain Krishna Rao, happened to be adopted. He was a boy of sixteen summers and had been in occupation of the *gadi* for three years when Shivaji conquered Javli. It is alleged that Shivaji got into possession of this valuable piece of territory by means of a pre-meditated and cold-blooded murder which was the outcome of 'organized treachery'. (Sarkar)

There is little doubt that Shivaji was a pragmatic idealist. He was extremely ambitious and determined to secure his ends without making bones about the means. Javli was rich, strategically important, and lay athwart the path of his expansion. As we have already noted, Shivaji did have recourse to a stratagem at Supa and bribery at Kondana. But these facts alone cannot justify pre-judging his conduct at Javli. In our humble opinion, the available evidence is inadequate to establish that the acquisition of Javli was brought about by 'organized treachery'.

Sir Jadunath Sarkar has discussed this incident in his *Shivaji and His Times*. But his categorical indictment is based upon evidence which leaves us unconvinced. Brushing aside the *Shiva-Bharat* and the *Jedhe Shakavali*, as unhelpful he seems to have relied mainly on Sabhasad and *Tarikh-i-Shivaji*. The complete authenticity in all details of this last named work, in its available form (in Persian), is yet to be convincingly established. The only contemporary authority, explicitly cited by Sarkar is Sabhasad. However, after having quoted from his (Sabh. 10) and certified that 'There is no reason to disbelieve such an authority in a matter like this,' he summarizes his conclusions, drawn 'from a consideration of all the materials,' thus:

'The then Chandra Rao, named Krishnaji and eighth in succession from the founder, was a boy of sixteen and all his business was conducted by his kinsman, Hanumant Rao More, who was his *diwan*. Raghunath Ballal *Korde*, under

Shivaji's orders, visited Hanumant with a pretended offer of marriage between his master and the late Chandra Rao's daughter, and treacherously slew him at a private meeting. [Sarkar, ibid, p. 65, speaks of Shambhuji Kavji as 'the murderer of H. More.'] He escaped unscathed and quickly brought Shivaji to the scene with a vast army. Javli was captured after six hours' fighting, and several members of the More family were taken prisoner. But Chandra Rao was either absent from the place or fled away before its fall. He took refuge in Raigarh. Shiva invested it and gained possession of it by negotiations. The two boys, Krishnaji Chandra Rao More and his younger brother Baji Rao More, were carried away by Shivaji to Poona and there the elder one was beheaded.'

None of these details 'critically discussed' and finally concatenated by Sarkar as 'the most probable reconstruction' of the Javli affair, tallies with Sabhasad's account given by him earlier. There Raghunath Ballal Korde was commissioned 'to kill' *Chandra Rao*; actually he finds that *Hanumant Rao* was slain, and *Chandra Rao took refuge in Raigarh.* According to Sabhasad, Raghunath 'stabbed Chandra Rao and his brother Surya Rao,' and 'the assassins promptly rushed out of the gate, cut their way through the alarmed and confused guards, beat back the small and hurriedly gathered band of pursuers and gained a chosen place of hiding in the forest.' According to Sabhasad, again, it was Hanumant Rao [who held out in a neighbouring village, after Chandra Rao and Surya Rao were stabbed. Then there were pretended negotiations and Hanumant Rao was stabbed by *Sambhaji Kavji*, and not by Raghunath Korde. The discrepancies have not been explained by Sir Jadunath. If Sabhasad was really 'such an authority there is no reason to disbelieve in a matter like this,' we find no reason either why his details should be tampered with or his authoritative account contradicted finally.

For one thing, Sarkar has not strictly adhered to Sabhasad's text in his citations: (*i*) 'learning that Chandra Rao usually lived in a careless unguarded manner' is contrary to Sabhasad's description of Javli as a place well guarded by ten to twelve thousand troops (असे जबरदस्त गढ कोठ दहाबारा हजार लष्कर हाशम समेत राज्य करीत असत.) The 'small and hurriedly gather-

ed band of pursuers,' therefore, does not sound plausible. (*ii*) There is nothing in Sabhasad's text which corresponds to— 'and gained a chosen place of hiding in the forest.' Secondly, the name of the younger brother given by Sabhasad is Suryaji Rao and not Baji Rao. Both of them were stabbed and presumably killed (खासाच पडालियावरी) according to Sabhasad; but Chandra Rao was absent and came to terms with Shivaji later at Raigarh, according to Sarkar. Finally, the two brothers were taken to Poona where Chandra Rao *alone* (says Sarkar) was beheaded: though according to his other authority (*Tarikh-i-Shivaji*), 'Shivaji sent Raghunath Ballal to *Chandra Rao* to ask for the hand of *his* fair daughter. On reaching the place, Raghunath first went to the diwan Hanumant Rao and stabbed him to death at the interview. He returned by a night-march to Śhivaji (at Purandar), who was highly delighted and by quick marches arrived before Javli with a vast army and took it after six hours of fighting. The *sardars* Baji and Krishna Rao, aged 14 and 16 years respectively, were brought prisoners to Poona and there beheaded. *The women and children were set free.*'

Here again, it is obvious that Chandra Rao who was only 16 years of age could not have had a daughter whom Shivaji might even pretend to ask in marriage. Besides, 'the late Chandra Rao's daughter' spoken of by Sir Jadunath finds no place in any of the authorities cited by him. Though *T. S.* states that both the brothers were beheaded, Baji is found alive by Sarkar, on other evidence, and therefore could not have been beheaded by Shivaji at Poona. His attempt at the repudiation of the alleged correspondence of Chandra Rao with the Adilshahi government for recovering his heritage ('which would be a quite natural and legitimate desire') is too naive, inasmuch as he himself admits that Baji escaped (on 28th August, according to the *Shivapur Daftar Yadi*), assumed the hereditary title of Chandra Rao, and in March 1665 joined Jai Singh for war against Shivaji; Ambaji Govind Rao More was also with him.

In the light of the above examination of Sir Jadunath Sarkar's version of the Javli incident we should look for something more plausible. That Shivaji captured Javli after six hours fighting, and that Chandra Rao submitted at Raigarh

after negotiations, are two important facts admitted by Sarkar, after considering all the evidence. The contemporary Jedhe *Sakavali* records: 'Shivaji goes and captures Javli, after taking with himself and fighting with the help of, the contingents of Kanhoji Jedhe Deshmukh, and Bandal, and Silimkar and the Deshmukhs of Maval.'

Further details are supplied by the Jedhe *Karina* which states: 'In course of time when an expedition against Javli was planned, Kanhoji Nayak and the Deshmukhs were summoned together with their contingents and sent against the Mores of Javli who had been already routed by Kanhoji and who had fled from Javli. Later, however, Hanumant Rao More renewed the insurrection in the Jor valley against whom Shivaji sent Raghunath Ballal *Sabnis* with a body of troops from Poona. Raghunath Ballal killed Hanumant Rao and took possession of Jor.

'Soon after, Shivaji himself went against Javli with the troops of the Deshmukhs and captured it on 31 December 1655. When Chandra Rao lost Javli he took shelter at Rairi (*i.e.* Raigad) where Shivaji besieged him. The besieging party was composed of the continents of Kanhoji and other Deshmukhs among whom was one Haibat Rao Silimkar Deshmukh of Gunjan Maval. He mediated for Chandra Rao with Shivaji and brought about a meeting between them. Negotiations took place and Rairi was captured in the *Durmukhi* year 1578 *s*. For these services, Haibat Rao Silimkar was given a fresh seal of Deshmukhi in his jurisdiction of Gunjan Maval and Shivaji composed his domestic quarrel by effecting a partition.'

An elaborate and interesting account of the Javli incident is also available in the More *Bakhar* which was first published by D. B. Parasnis in his *Itihasa Samgraha* (June 1909). According to it, Krishnaji Baji ruled at Javli for three years when Shivaji demanded submission from him. The proud More, however, was not to be easily cowed down. 'Then there came to be great enmity between Chandra Rao and Shivaji Maharaj. Shivaji Maharaj sent Surya Rao Kakde and 2000 infantry against Javli. Descending from the Nisni Ghat of Mahabaleshvar,.....they laid siege to Javli. The approaches of Javli were difficult; there were dense clusters

of bamboos. There the fighting went on for a month. At the end of the month Krishnaji Baji More Raje left Javli and went with his men to Raigad.....Shivaji Maharaj advanced against it. Chandra Rao held out at Raigad for three months. Then peace was made.' Then follow illuminating details of the scene of meeting. Shivaji intended to restore Javli to Chandra Rao if he agreed to be submissive and loyal.'Taking Krishnaji with him, he came to Chakan. Krishnaji wrote secretly to Vyankaji Raje Ghorpade of Mudhol, a *mansabdar* of Bijapur: You are a *mansabdar* of the Padshah. We too are esteemed rajas under the Padshahi.....You and we are relatives. Shivaji Raje Bhosle is self-styled king. He has made such trouble for the Padshah. So, by hook or crook, in any way that you think suitable secure our release from here and take us to Mudhol. After we have joined you, we shall then exert ourselves to the utmost..... These letters were discovered by the messengers of Shivaji Maharaj.....He read them, and saw there was treachery. Then he said to Krishnaji: You and I met at Raigad. You gave me your word of honour that you would not be unfriendly to me. Still, you sent treasonable letters to Vyankaji Ghorpade. It is clear from this that you Mores are faithless people.—Thus accusing him, Shivaji Maharaj had him beheaded at Chakan. From that time the rule of the Mores disappeared from Javli.'

The charge of treason has not, therefore, issued from 'some modern theorists' as Sarkar alleges, but is at least as old and authentic as the above record. The conduct ascribed to Baji More by Sarkar is also in keeping with that. Shivaji's first interference with the Mores appears to have been in connection with the succession disputes after the death of Daulat Rao, the last of the Chandra Raos in direct lineal descent. Krishnaji Baji Raje was adopted from the Shivthar family. Appeals from rival claimants invited interference from outside. Afzal Khan, the *subahdar* of Wai, deputed Kanhoji Jedhe to settle the affairs of Javli, but he proved to be in league with Shivaji. Hanumant Rao, having taken possession of Jor (or Johar) Khore, must have invited punishment upon himself. Similarly, Sabhasad speaks of another Babaji Rau as a बंड or rebel whom Shivaji, after the fall of Javli, impri-

soned and blinded. Many a border dispute between the Mores and Shivaji which embittered their relations is also on record. There is every reason to believe that Krishnaji owed his position to Shivaji. The *Tarikh-i-Shivaji* refers to him as *sardar*, not *raja*. Hence Shivaji's demand from him to renounce the title of *Raje* as recorded in the More *Bakhar*. These antecedents explain Shivaji's conquest of Javli in 1656.

The Mores being loyal to and dependent on Bijapur, were obviously a thorn in the side of Shivaji. He would not tolerate them unless they showed loyal submission to him. Failing this he felt it necessary to remove them from his path of expansion. Hence Sabhasad's statement: चंदरराव मोरे यास मारल्या विरहित राज्य साधत नाहीं. त्यास तुम्हा वांचून हें कर्म कोणास न होय. तुम्ही त्यांजकडे हेजबीस जाणे.—'The kingdom cannot achieve (its objectives) unless Chandra Rao More is *beaten* (subdued). None can accomplish this better than you. You should go to him for *negotiations*.' He (Raghunath Ballal *Sabnis*) was sent as *hejib* or envoy with an escort of 100-125 armed men. It would have been a suicidal venture for such a small party to proceed on a *murderous* errand to a stronghold well defended by 10-12 thousand troops. If, despite this, the emissary attacked any of the Mores single-handed in the course of the interview, his rashness cannot be construed as an act of *premeditated murder treacherously planned and instigated by Shivaji*. Henry II, in our opinion, was more guilty of the murder of Becket than Shivaji in the alleged crime at Javli. Yet, it was Hanumant Rao that was killed, and not Chandra Rao. The verb *mar* has been used by Sabhasad on the same page in the sense of 'raid' in the sentences: 'जुन्नर शहर मारिले; मग अमदानगर मारिले; मोंगलाशी मोठें युद्ध केलें.' 'Junnar city was raided; Ahmadnagar was raided; a great battle was fought with the Mughals.' मार does not therefore, necessarily mean only 'kill'. Moreover, we do not find the name of Raghunath Ballal Korde (who was merely an envoy) among those who were rewarded for distinguished action during the Javli campaign. Had he accomplished the important 'murder' upon which he had been deliberately set by Shivaji as alleged, we should have expected him to be highly rewarded like Bir Singh Bundela by Jahangir for the assassination of Abul Fadl.

According to Sabhasad, Moro Trimbak Pingle was rewarded with the *Peshvaship*; that office was formerly held by Shamrao Nilkanth Rozekar. Nilo Sondev was made *Surnis* and Gangaji Mangaji became *Vaknis*. Balambhat and Govindbhat (sons of the celebrated Prabhakarbhat) continued to be *Upadhyes*. Netaji Palkar was created *Sarnobat* of 7000 horse and 3000 *siledars*; and Yesaji Kank that of 10,000 Maval infantry. 'Thus the kingdom was strengthened.' Evidently, Raghunath Ballal Korde must have continued to be *Sabnis* or pay-master; Balkrishna Dikshit *Mujumdar* or Accountant-General, and Sonaji Pant *Dabir* or Secretary. They had been appointed by Shahji as men of tried ability, as early as 1639. To them Shivaji had added Tukoji Chor Maratha, as *Sarnobat*, and Narayan Pant as divisional Paymaster.

The acquisition of Javli brought great accession of strength to Shivaji. Its hoarded treasures augmented his resources in money; and its very position gave him immense strategic advantages. He followed up this success by the subjugation of the Surves and Shirkes of Shringarpur. Now perched on the Sahyadri, at a point (4000 ft. above sea-level) where no fewer than eight passes cross the range into the Konkan, through countless gorges and narrow foot-tracks, he erected the historic stronghold of Pratapgad and installed therein his inspiring goddess Bhavani. He had also secured Raigad which was ultimately to be his capital where his coronation as *Chhatrapati* was celebrated in 1674. Immediately his greatest gain was that the recruiting ground of his famous Maval troops was enlarged. His Kingdom now comprised, besides Javli and its fortresses, Supa, Baramati and Indapur in the S. E.; Purandar, Raigad, Kondana and Torna in the S.; and Tikona, Lohagad and Rajmachi in the N. W.,—overlooking the Konkan coast from the crest of the Sahyadri Range.

It will be obvious from the above position that the Konkan would be the most natural field of expansion for Shivaji's kingdom. There, however, Shivaji had to reckon with Bijapur the Mughals, the Siddis, and the Europeans (Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English). Though the Mughals were to prove, finally for Shivaji, the most formidable enemy (Aurangzeb was Viceroy of the Deccan from 1636-44 and 1652-57), his immediate concern was with Bijapur and the

Siddis as its subordinates. The Europeans were, by their situation and interests, always sitting on the fence. Aurangzeb was cleverly egging on Bijapur to tackle Shivaji who was fast growing into a menace for the Muslim powers. The message he left for 'Adil Shah when he hurriedly left of the North to contest the throne speaks for itself: 'Expel Shiva who has sneaked into the possession of some of the forts of the land,' it said: 'If you wish to entertain his services, give him *jagirs* in the Karnatak far from the imperial dominions so that he may not disturb them.' Shivaji had extended his activities as far as Junnar and Ahmadnagar (of which we shall speak later), and Aurangzeb had also instructed his officers to carry on reprisals devastating and plundering without pity. Poona and Chakan were to be utterly ruined, its people enslaved or killed, and those who had abetted Shiva's depredations in the imperial territories to be slain without mercy.

The state of Bijapur at this time was pitiable. Muhammad Adil Shah had died on 4 Nov. 1656. Aurangzeb had compelled his successor to cede Bidar, Kalyani and Parenda together with the payment of an indemnity of one *crore* of rupees. Internally, the murder of Khan-i-Khanan Khan Muhammad (11 Nov. 1657) indicated that all was not well at Bijapur. The very able officer Mulla Muhammad had been called away from Kalyan, and Shivaji found his opportunity there. Aurangzeb was playing a double game: while advising the Adil Shah to protect his country 'as the son of a dog was waiting for his opportunity,' he kept 'the path of correspondence with Shiva open.' Finally, on 25 January 1658, he wrote to Shivaji: 'Though your offences do not deserve pardon, I forgive you as you have repented, You propose that if you are granted all the villages belonging to your home together with the forts and territory of Konkan, after the imperials have seized the old Nizamshahi territory now in the hands of the Adil Shah,—You will send Sona Pandit as your envoy to my Court, and a contingent of 500 horse under one of your officers to serve under me, and you will protect the imperial frontiers. You are called upon to send Sonaji and your prayers will be granted.' When Shivaji invaded the Konkan, therefore, he appeared to have done so with imperial connivance if not imperial authority; though, as a

matter of fact, he had seized Kalyan and Bhivandi on 24 Oct. 1657.

'In the *Hemalambi* year *shaka* 1579,' the Jedhe *Karina* states, 'an expedition was undertaken against the Portuguese at Kalyan and Bhivandi. Dadaji Bapuji (a cousin of Shamraj Pant *Peshve*) was put in charge of it. Dadaji Krishna and his brother Sakhoji (the *Karbharis* of Kanhoji Nayak) were specially called with their strong Maval contingents. Dadaji Krishna was put in charge of Kalyan and Sakhoji in charge of Bhivandi. They captured Kalyan and Bhivandi, plundered the Portuguese possessions, and established a post at Aseri. The Portuguese agreed to pay a *khandi* and a quarter of gold every year. Shivaji fortified the creek at Durgadi. This was a grand achievement, as it brought in plenty of money and provisions.' The account concludes with the observations that Sakhoji was killed in the operations, but the whole territory was captured; that Abaji Mahadev was placed in charge of the conquered territory; that the vast collection of iron weapons, rockets, etc. captured were distributed over several forts; and that Shivaji founded Shivapattan at the foot of Rajgad as well as strengthened the defence of Prabhalgad (east of Panvel). He also made Kalyana naval base and built dockyards.

On 8 January 1658 he seized Mahuli. 'His progress into the Kolaba district appears to have been assisted by local chiefs who were eager to throw off the Muslim yoke.' A number of other fortresses were either acquired or built: Surgad, Birwadi, Tula, Ghoshalgad, Sudhagad, etc. Both the Siddis of Janjira and the Portuguese were alarmed by these activites, and Bijapur determined to stop the aggressions. The result was the campaign of Afzal Khan who started in September 1659 despite the rainy season, only to meet with his tragic end at Pratapgad on 10 Nov. 1659. This brings us to a discussion of another great controversy on the conduct and motives of Shivaji. Historically, it is important because the overthrow of Afzal Khan was for Shivaji and the Marathas really a triumph over Bijapur or the Adilshahi.

The account of this epic incident given in the Jedhe *Karina* appears to us to be the most plausible. According to it Afzal Khan ordered all the Maval Deshmukhs to join him at once

with all their troops. Kedarji and Khandoji Khopde were among the first to obey his summons. But Kanhoji Jedhe informed Shivaji of what was happening. Since the narrative of the *Karina* is too long, we would recommend the reader to peruse it either in the Marathi text or in the *Shivaji Souvenir* translation. We shall merely recount it here very briefly in part. The oaths exchanged between Kanhoji and Shivaji on this historic and critical occasion are very illuminating.

'Kanhoji Nayak informed Shivaji of these happenings in a personal letter, to which he received a reply that Kanhoji should get all the people to swear an oath of loyalty, or that he should please himself by going over to the Khan. In this situation, Kanhoji Nayak, with his five sons, went and saw Shivaji at Shivapattan and addressed him thus, in a private interview:—"Your father had obtained an oath from me and sent me in your service. I am prepared to remain true to it. I am at your service, with my five sons and all my men, and will fight upto death for you. If we die, who is going to enjoy the *watan*? I cannot prove false to my oath." Thereupon Shivaji said: "If so, you should solemnly swear the renunciation of your *watan*." Kanhoji took some water into his hands and poured it down in confirmation.... Then Shivaji and Kanhoji ate milk and rice together, put their hands on *bel-bhandar*, and exchanged solemn oaths: Shivaji saying, "We and our descendants shall never fail to look after you and your descendants; when I am victorious I shall reward you justly." Then Kanhoji conveyed the message to all the Deshmukhs declaring: "The Khan is treacherous. When his object is accomplished, he will ruin us all. *This Maratha kingdom is our own. We should stand by Shivaji and protect it with our contingents and courage.*" They repeated the oaths and Shivaji got together an army of the Mavales.'

Then the visit of the Khan was negotiated and arranged at Pratapgad, through Pantaji Gopinath. Kanhoji and the other Deshmukhs were stationed at Javli: Bandal was posted at Dare, and Haibatrao Balaji Silimkar at Boche-gholi Pass. At a private conference Shivaji told Kanhoji: 'I have full confidence in you, but I am not equally sure about the others. You know how treacherous the Khan is. If I succeed at the meeting, three guns will be fired from the fort, on which

you should all attack the Khan's forces at Par. If I am captured by the Khan, you should block his path at Wardhani and prevent his forces joining him.' Shivaji again got Kanhoji to swear loyalty. Kanhoji once more promised to execute his orders fully.

'A grand structure was erected at the foot of Pratapgad where Afzal Khan came to visit Shivaji, in the month of *Kartika* of the *Vikari* year *shaka* 1581, seated in a palanquin, and accompained by his envoy and escort. Shivaji had already selected his men and assigned to them various duties. During the meeting, Afzal Khan caught hold of Shivaji's neck under his arm, when Shivaji cut open his entrails. On getting neck released Shivaji took out his sword. The Khan's men put him into the palanquin and began to run. His envoy and some attendants attacked and wounded Pantaji Gopinath. Instantly, however, Jiva Mahala, Baji Sarje Rao, and a few others, counter-attacked them, pulled down the Khan from his palanquin and Shivaji severed his head.The guns were at once fired from the fort;Kanhoji and the Deshmukhs attacked the Bijapuri force at Par and captured their elephants, horses and materials. The Khopdes fled with fifty of their followers along the bank of the Koyna. Thus was the victory won by Shivaji.'

The whole affair has been well discussed from various points of view and sources by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his *Shivaji and His Times.* We find no reason to disagree with either his evidence or his conclusions. 'The weight of recorded evidence, as well as the probabilities of the case,' he writes, 'support the view that Afzal Khan struck the first blow and Shivaji only committed what Burke calls, a preventive murder.' It was, as I wrote in the *Modern Review* in 1907, 'a case of diamond cut diamond'.

The situation should be humanly visualised. Shivaji was by now fighting, not for his own personal advancement, but for *the liberation of his people and country* from the yoke of the Muslims. He had succeeded hitherto in extending his power and influence without facing a big army or fighting a pitched battle. May be, as Aurangzeb put it, he had 'sneaked into' possession of several forts and lands. Now he was confronted with an experienced general, an army comprising

at least 10,000 cavalry and artillery, etc. The Bijapur government had set its whole machinery of administration to mobilize even the Maval Deshmukhs against Shivaji. Afzal Khan had started with a bravado and fanfaronade that were calculated to demoralize and unnerve the Marathas. He had boasted: 'What is Shivaji! I shall bring him alive a prisoner without even once alighting from my horse.' If the traditional accounts are to be trusted, he had started with a devastating campaign laying his impious hands on Tulja Bhavani. Even the English had come to know that the Dowager Queen of Bijapur, 'because she knew with that strength (10,000 horse) he (Afzal Khan) was not able to resist Shivaji, counselled him *to pretend friendship with his enemy, which he did.*' Under these circumstances, Shivaji acted with alacrity and judgment.

Afzal Khan seemed equally anxious, in spite of his bluster to capture Shivaji if he could without fighting a battle. He, therefore, proposed parleying through his envoy Krishnaji Bhaskar. But Shivaji caught scent of the Khan's real intentions,- 'whether through intelligence or suspicion it's not known,' write the English. He took counsel with his mother, Jijabai; he had a vision, or the goddess Bhavani appeared to encourage and bless him, in a dream. He also 'kept his powder dry,' made sagacious dispositions of his troops reinforced with the divisions of Netaji Palkar and Moro Trimbak Pingle, and determined to face the consequences with coolness, caution and courage. The result was a triumph of superior strategy: the tragedy of Malik-u't-Tujar and his ill-fated army, in the Bahmani adventure against the Shirkes, repeated itself. It was *a national crisis for the Marathas;* and, as with the Spanish Armada in the English Channel, in 1588, God seemed to have breathed his squall and scattered the enemy's forces. The ambushed Maratha armies fell upon the Bijapur cavalry, and the carnage was terrible. Only those who begged for quarter 'holding grass between their teeth' were spared. 3,000 men were killed, according to reports received by the English at Rajapur a few days later. Even elephants and camels were hacked to pieces; 4,000 horses, 1,200 camels,65 elephants, treasures worth more than 10 *lakhs* of rupees, besides artillery, waggons, ammunition, etc. were

captured by the Marathas. Needless to add, it brought glory to Shivaji and humiliation to Bijapur.

Smarting under this blow, the Bijapur government despatched another army under Fazl Khan, son of Afzal Khan, who had escaped from the holocaust. Shivaji was besieged at Panhala by 15,000 Adilshahi troops, while the Maratha garrison numbered no more than 5–6,000. It was an unequal struggle; yet Shivaji escaped through superior strategy. Dividing his forces, he left for Vishalgad (27 miles to the West) with half his army on 13 July 1660, leaving Panhala in the charge of the gallant Pratap Rao Gujar. He was hotly pursued, but the heroism of Baji Prabhu, Deshpande of Hirdas Maval–Leonidas of Maratha history–enabled Shivaji to escape by holding up the pursuers at Pavankhind.

'Death clamoured, and tall figures strew'd the ground Like trees in a cyclone.' (Sri Aurobindo).

Seven hundred brave Marathas laid down their lives in this 'Thermopylae' for the safety of their King. Panhala was lost (22 Sept. 1660), but the Saviour of the Marathas was saved. Next came the struggle with the Mughal empire.

It has been observed before that, towards the close of Aurangzeb's last viceroyalty in the Deccan, the Marathas had already begun their incursions into the imperial territory. Bijapur had narrowly escaped from the designs of Aurangzeb at least for the time being, and was inclined to wink at Shivaji's raids beyond the Adilshahi dominions. Ahmadnagar and Junnar were despoiled by the Marathas. From the latter place alone Shivaji obtained 3,00,000 *hons*, 200 horses, and much jewellery and clothing. However, not until Aurangzeb was firmly seated on his ill-gotten throne, could he take effective steps for the security of the Deccan which he had hurriedly forsaken in 1657. In July 1659 he despatched his uncle Sha'ista Khan as its Viceroy.

While Shivaji was besieged at Panhala, the new Mughal Viceroy opened a 'second front' against the Marathas by attacking Chakan (18 miles to the North of Poona). This place was of strategic value on the route from Ahmadnagar into the Konkan. It was valiantly defended by the old Maratha veteran Firangji Narsala. He held out tenaciously for two months, and extorted admiration even from Sha'ista

Khan. When he was forced to capitulate he refused to be enticed away from his allegiance to Shivaji and was allowed to rejoin his master.

On 3 February 1661 Shivaji surprised Kar Talb Khan, the Mughal officer who had been commissioned by Sha'ista Khan to recapture Kalyan. While the Khan was descending from the Bhor Ghat with his heavy artillery and baggage, Shivaji pounced upon him and, cutting off alike his retreat and advance, forced him to buy his escape with a ransom. He followed up this initiative by a cyclonic campaign in the Konkan. Posting Netaji Palkar to take care of his rear, Shivaji overran the Adilshahi coastal districts from Danda-Rajapuri to Kharepatan. His movements were so rapid that no opposition was offered anywhere. Pilaji Nilkanth and Tanaji Malusare distinguished themselves during this campaign. Shivaji secured his fresh gains in the Konkan by building new strongholds like Mandangad and Palgarh, recalling the fugitives, and encouraging the agriculturists and traders with generous subsidies. Though the Mughals reconquered Kalyan and dominated Northern Konkan (1661-63), Shivaji retained his hold over Ratnagiri and the S. E. corner of the Kolaba District. Then come the great *coup* at Poona in the night of 5 April, 1663: a blow, as Sarkar has described it, whose cleverness of design, neatness of execution and completeness of success created in the Mughal Court and camp as much terror about Shivaji's prowess, as his *coup* against Afzal Khan had done among the Bijapuris.

Sha'ista Khan had occupied Poona since 9 May 1660. But the celebrated adventure of Shivaji, whose romantic details are familiar to every schoolboy, appears to have taken place not in the Lal Mahal itself–but in the camp. Both Sabhasad and Abbe Carre speak of the 'camp' rather than of a house or palace. Philip Gyfford's letter of 12 April 1663 (from Rajapur to Surat) gives us the best contemporary report of the incident.

'Rauji Pandit,' it states, 'is returned, and present upon his arrival he desired me to write to Your Worship...Yesterday arrived a letter from the Rajah, written by himself, to Rauji giving him an account how that he himself, with 400 choice men, went to Sha'ista Khan's camp; there, upon some pre-

tence (which he did not insert in his letter) he got into his tent to *salam*, and presently slew all the watch, killed Sha'ista Khan's eldest son, his son-in-law, twelve of his chief women, forty great persons attending their general; wounded Sha'ista Khan with his own hand (and thought to death, but since hears he lives), wounded six more of his wives, two more of his sons; and after all this, returns but losing six men and forty wounded; 10,000 horse under Rajah Jaswant Singh standing still and never offered to pursue him; so that it is generally believed it was done with his consent, though Shivaji tells his men, his *Parameshvara* bid him do it.

The consequences of such master-strokes of strategy might very well be imagined. The catastrophe earned for Sha'ista Khan a penal transfer to Bengal which a chronicler has described as 'hell crammed with good things'. Shivaji was fast acquiring a reputation for working miracles: 'Report hath made him an airy body, and added wings; or else it were impossible he could be at so many places, as he is said to be at, all at one time.... They ascribe to him to perform more than a Herculean labour that he is become the talk of all conditions of people...Shivaji reigns victoriously and uncontrolled, that he is a terror to all the kings and princes round about, daily increasing in strength...He is very nimble and active, imposing strange labour upon himself that he may endure hardship, and also exercises his chiefest men that he flies to and fro with incredible dexterity.'

One important element in Shivaji's strategy was that he allowed no breathing time to his enemies and acted with incredible swiftness. Soon after his Poona adventure he descended into the Konkan and struck a blow at those who were friendly towards Bijapur. The Savant of Kudal was the chief victim of this campaign. Though a Bhosla, like Shivaji, Lakham Savant had been acting contrary to the interests of the Marathas and, consequently, Shivaji thought it necessary to occupy his territory. The Dutch Register for 4 Nov. 1663 states:—'At last, on the 23rd May, the great rebel Siwasi, originator of all these internal troubles, has come down to the province of Candael with his army comprising of 4,000 horsemen and 10,000 footmen, which created a great fear and panic among the inhabitants of Vingurla. The Dessy (Desai)

Lokhamsant (Lakshman Savant), well known from former letters, sent a Brahmin to the Company's camp with the information of Siwasi's arrival, and with the request that our men, the governor and all the merchants of Vingurla, would come to the place where he stayed at the moment called Wari leaving the camp (or lodging) under the care of only 2 or 3 Dutchmen. The Resident, considering this a treacherous scheme to murder him, declined this offer; and indeed, afterwards our men heard that the said Lokhamsant intended to attack our residence, against which attack they prepared.' Another entry in the Dagh Register reads: 'Tidings came to Golkonda that our lodgings at Vingurla had been partially destroyed by Siwasi and that the inhabitants have fled.'

This was a blow intended more against Bijapur than against the European settlements. It was portentous of the more dramatic blow on Surat that was soon to follow. Alarmed by these activities, the Dowager Queen of Bijapur complained to Shahji of his son's depredations: 'Although you are a servant of this Government, you have committed treachery by sending your son Shivaji to Poona and upsetting the authority of the Badshah there. He has captured some forts belonging to the Badshah, conquered and plundered several districts and provinces, overthrown one or two principalities, and killed some chiefs submissive to the Badshah. Now keep your son under proper control or your *jagir* will be confiscated.' Shahji replied: 'Although Shivaji is my son, he has fled from me. He is no longer under my control. I am a faithful dependant of the Badshah. Though Shivaji is my son, His Majesty may attack him or deal with him in any way he likes; I shall not interfere.' A similar attempt was also made to tackle Shivaji through the Portuguese at Goa and the Desais of Kudal. Meanwhile Shivaji suddenly turned north and 'blitzed' Surat in the first week of January 1664.

On 5 January he was at Gandevi 28 miles south of Surat. The next day (Wednesday 6 Jan. 1664) at 11 a.m. he was within bowshot of the Burhanpur Gate of the emporium. Escaliot writes: 'Thuss farr, deare Browne, I had wrote on Tuesday the fifth January about ten in the morning, when on a sudden a strong alarme was brought to our house from the town with news that Seva-Gee Raya .... was coming downe

with an army of an uncertain number upon Surat to pillage the city, which news strooke no small consternation into the minds of a weak and effeminate people, in so much that on all hands there was nothing to be seene but people flying for their lives and lamenting the loss of their estates; the richer sort, whose stock of money was large enough to purchase that favour at the hands of the Governor of the Castle, made that their sanctuary and abandoned their dwellings to a merciless foe, wich they might well enough have defended with rest of the towne had they had the heartes of men.' But panic is paralysing, and as Carre observed, the courage of the inhabitants of Surat 'did not serve as ramparts'. In fact, the biggest port on this side of India belonging to the Mughal was 'unfortified by art or nature'. The Moors, through the unworthy covetousness of the governor of the town, 'had nobody to head them, nor none unto whome to joyne themselves, and so fled away for company' whereas if there had been 500 men trayned and in readyness, as by order of the king there ever should, whose pay the governor puts into his own pocket, the number to defend the city would have amounted to some thousands. This was the condition of the citty at the tyme of its invasion.'

'Wednesday the 6th January, about eleven in the morning,' says the contemporary eye-witness, 'Sevagee arrived near a great garden without the towne, about a quarter of a mile, and whilst he was busied in pitching his tents, sent his horsemen into the outward streets of the towne to fire the houses, soe that in less than half an houre wee might behold from the tops of our house two great pillars of smoke, the certaine signes of a great dissolation, and soe they continued burning that day and night, Thursday, Friday and Saturday: still new fires raised, and every day neerer and neerer approaching our quarter of the towne. That the terror was great, I know you will eassly believe, and upon his first beginning of his firing, the remainder of the people fled as thicke as possible, soe that on Thursday the streets were almost empty, wich at other tymes are exceeding thick with people, and we the English in our house, possessed of a Seraw or place of reception for strangers, were left by the governor and his people to make what shift we could to secure ourselves from the enemys:

this might the English and Duch have done, leaving the towne and going over the river to Swalley to our shipps which were then riding in Swalley hole, but it was thought more like Englishmen to make ourselves ready to defend our lives and goods to the uttermost than by flight to leave money, goods, house, to merciless people, and were confirmed in a resolution that the Duch also did the same, though there was no possibility of relieving one another, the Duch house being on the either side of towne almost an English mile asunder....

'Things being thus reasonably well prepared, newes is brought to us that Mr. Anthony Smith, a servant of the companyes, one whoe hath been chiefe in several factoryes was taken prisoner by Sevagees souldiers as he came ashore neere the Duch house, and was coming to the English...., hee obtaines leave some few houers after to send a note to the president, wherein hee acquaints him with his condition, that hee being brought before Sevagee hee was asked what he was and such like questions, and at last by *Śevajee told that he was not come to doe any personal hurte to the English or other merchants but only to revenge him selfe of Oram Zeb (the great Mughal), because he had invaded his country*, had killed some of his relations, and that hee would only have the English and Duch give him some treasure and hee would not medle with their houses, else hee would doe them all mischiefe possible.'

Though Mr. Smith was kept in duress until Friday afternoon, he was later released and sent back to the English as a messenger with a demand for three *lakhs* of rupees. But President Oxenden decided to face all consequences and detained him. Luckily, Shivaji having obtained sufficient booty otherwise, left Surat on Sunday morning: 'about 10 o'clock as they tell us hee went his way'.

Among the houses 'fired' by Shivaji were those of 'Hogee Said Beg' and 'Verge Voras' the two merchant princes of the Empire. 'On Friday after he had ransaked and dug up Verge Voras house, he fired it and a great vast number more toward the Duch house, a fire so great as turned the night into day: as before the smoke in the day tyme had almost turned day into night; rising soe thicke as it darkened the sun like a great cloud. The fires however, were not all started by the Marathas. We learn from Carre that, when the governor of the

castle opened artillery fire upon the town, he shot at random and if it was to a certain extent fraught with dangers in regard to Sevagy's soldiers, it rendered the destruction of the people of Surat most certain.'

The real character of Shivaji as a conqueror is revealed by his conduct under extreme provocation. It is in great contrast to Nadir Shah's at Delhi under similar temptation. During the *five* fatal hours (from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M.) on the terrible Sunday, 11 March 1739, there was greater slaughter and destruction at the imperial Mughal capital than during the *five days'* occupation of Surat by Shivaji. The random killing of a few of his followers by some ruffians in the streets of Delhi, according to Anandram Mukhlis, provoked the Persian into reprisals such as the capital had not witnessed during the 348 years since Hazrat Sahib-Kiran Amir Timur ordered the inhabitants to be massacred. The loss in lives and treasure was indeed incalculable. Neither age nor sex was respected by the furies let loose upon the city; the miscreants in some cases appeared to have escaped leaving the innocent to be victimised. Several men and women were driven to insanity and suicide in their desperation. The streets and houses were glutted with corpses, and soon the stench of these threatened to choke the living. The *debris* could be cleared and cleansed only by means of fire. 'By degrees the violence of the flames subsided, but the bloodshed, the devastation, and the ruin of families were irreparable. For a long time the streets remained strewn with corpses, as the walk of a garden with dead leaves and flowers. The town was reduced to ashes, and had the appearance of a plain consumed with fire. All the regal jewels and property and the contents of the treasury were seized by the Persian conqueror in the citadel. He thus became possessed of treasure to the extent of 60 *lacs* of rupees, and several thousand *ashrafis* plate of gold to the value of one *crore* of rupees, and the jewels many of which were unrivalled in beauty by any in the world, were valued at about 50 *crores*. The peacock throne alone, constructed at great pains in the reign of Shah Jahan, had cost one *crore* of rupees. Elephants, horses, and precious stuffs, whatever pleased the conqueror's eyes, more indeed than can be enumerated, became his spoil. In short,

the accumulated wealth of 348 years changed masters in a moment.'

Shivaji behaved with remarkable restraint while an attempt on his life was actually made in Surat at the instigation of the chicken-hearted governor. The assassin struck the blow and Shivaji rolled in a pool of blood, but when he recovered he did not give away to wild vengeance like the Irani invader. The English observer writes: 'The fellow having made his thrust at Sevagee with all his might, did not stop but ran his bloody stump against Sevagees breast, and with such force that Sevagee and hee fell together, the blood being seen upon Sevagee, the noise ran through the camp that hee was killed, and the crye went, 'kill the prisoners,' whereupon some were miserably hacked; *but Sevagee haveing quitted himselfe*, and hee that stood by haveing cloven the fellows skull, *command was given to stay the execution*, and to bring the prisoners before him, which was immediately done; and Sevagee, according as it came in his minde, caused them to cutt of this mans head, that mans right hand, both the hands of a third.' All together about four heads and 24 hands were cut off. Then it came to be Mr. Smith's turn (being caught as one of the suspected): and his right hand being commanded to be cutt of, hee cryed out in Indostani to Sevagee,rather to cutt of his head, *unto which end his hatt was taken of, but Sevagee stopped execution*, and soe praised be God, hee escaped!'

Thevenot, who passed through Surat two years afterwards (10 Jan. 1666 to Feb. 1667), further noted with satisfaction: 'All the rest of the town was plundered except the monastery of the Capuchins. *When the plunderers were in front of their Convent they passed by, and they had orders from their chief to do likewise*, because on the eve of the very first day, Father Ambrose, who was their Superior, moved with pity for the Christians inhabiting Sourat, went to see this Raja to speak to them in their favour, and to beg him at least to do no violence to their persons. *Sivagy had respect for him. He took him under his protection and granted him what he wanted for the Christians.*' Cosme da Guarda categorically confirms: 'Men, women and children ran naked without knowing where and to whom. *But no one was in the peril of his life, for it*

was the strict order of Sevagy that, unless resistance was offered, no one should be killed; and as none resisted none perished.'

Shivaji, according to Carre, then left Surat as easily as he had entered it, 'having found in one single city all the wealth of the East and securing such war-funds as would not fail him for a long time.' Thevenot's estimate of the wealth secured by Shivaji was 'in jewels, gold and silver, to the value of above thirty French millions.' According to the English President,they took away 'in gold, pearle, precious stones and other rich goods, to the value of money hundred thousand pounds.' Bernier reckoned that Shivaji returned 'laden with gold and silver to the amount of several millions, with pearls, silken stuffs, fine clothes and a variety of other costly merchandise'. Finally, Valentyn states: 'Everything of beauty existing in Surat was that day reduced to ashes...Two or three Banian merchants lost several millions, and the total loss was estimated at 30 millions...He (Shivaji) and his followers appropriated only the most valuable spoils and *distributed the less valuable things*, which could only hamper their retreat, *among the poor, whereby many acquired much more than what they had lost through fire and pillage*...(Shivaji) departed at the first gleam of daylight,*delighted to have plucked such a fine feather from Aurangzeb's tail.'*

Valentyn has hit the nail admirably on the head. No conquest or annexation was intended by Shivaji. He only wanted to singe the Emperor's beard as the English 'sea-dogs' Drake and Hawkins had done at Cadiz. He also wanted the 'war-funds' as Carre noted. All other things were only incidental to the raid. Few other conquerors in history have displayed the restraint and humanity shown by Shivaji during his attack on Surat.

The defences of the greatest port of the Empire had been sadly neglected. According to Cosme da Guarda 'some confused news of his (Shivaji's) intention reached Surrate but caused a great laughter, as hundred and eighty thousand cavalry were encamped in the very territories of which Sevagy had become master.' But when Shivaji actually appeared on the scene, Inayet Khan, the governor, shut himself up 'like a woman' inside the fort, and when his men fired out of sheer desperation, 'more damage was done to the town

than the enemy.' Prince Muazzam who had succeeded Sha'ista Khan as viceroy in the Deccan, was regaling himself at Ahmadnagar, 'caring only for pleasure and hunting.' Jaswant Singh tried to save himself from obloquy (on account of his alleged delinquency during the Sha'ista Khan incident) by besieging Kondana. He was at it from November 1663 to 28 May 1664, but was obliged to retire for the monsoon to Aurangabad, worse off than what he had been at the start. But Shivaji was quite a different type of general to wait upon the vagaries of weather. Despite the inclemency of the season he suddenly swooped down upon Ahmadnagar while the imperialists were still expecting him to be chewing the cud from Surat!

When Aurangzeb awakened to the realities of the situation he did two things: (1) to set Surat on the road to recovery, and (2) to open a grand offensive against the 'grand rebel' Shivaji. The two measures were not altogether unconnected. Surat was an important source of revenue to the Mughal Empire. Shivaji's raid had dealt a blow at once to the treasury and the *prestige* of the Empire. The sinews of war came from the coffer of the 'Banians', both Christian and heathen. 'As the advantage the great Mogal derived from Surrate was enormous', writes Guarda, 'and the governor had informed him (Aurangzeb) that all was lost and the merchants were arranging for a change of place on account of the scant security of Surrate, he resolved to remedy everything by sending an army that would totally destroy Sevagy and detain the merchants. He ordered that they should be excused duties for three years, during which period nothing should be paid for import or export. This appeased and relieved all, for it was a very great favour in view of the large capital employed by those Gentios in trade. The wealth of those people is so great that when the Great Mogal sent for a loan of four millions to Baneane Doracandas Vorase, he answered that His Majesty should name the coin and the sum would immediately be paid in it.....*What is still more surprising is that the major part of the Baneane's capital was nvested at Surate and this offer was made four years after the sack of Sevagy.* So much had already been accumulated, and

considerable had been the profit of those three years when no tax was paid.'

We find confirmation of the above in a letter dated 4 August 1664, written by the Dutch Governor-General to the Directors of their East India Company: 'King Orangech has ordered the town of Surat to be surrounded by a stone wall,' it says, 'and has granted a year's exemption of tolls and duties to the merchants,the Company and the English being also included. This exemption was to begin from March 16th 1663, and we calculate that the Company will then gain a sum of Rs 50,000 (£4,200), *so that this catastrophe has brought us profit !*'

On 3 October 1670 Shivaji repeated his exploit at Surat. Property worth about 132 *lakhs* was looted and Surat remained in continual dread of the Marathas. As Sir J. Sarkar has observed, the real loss of Surat was not in the booty carried away by the Marathas: 'The trade of this, the richest port of India, was practically destroyed.....Business was effectively scared away from Surat, and inland producers hesitated to send their goods to this the greatest emporium of Western India.'

To turn from Surat to the grand offensive against Shivaji: Despatches arrived from Prince Muazzam, writes Khwafi Khan, to the effect that Shivaji was growing more and more audacious, and every day was attacking and plundering the imperial territories and caravans. He had seized the ports of Jiwal and Pabal and others near Surat, and attacked the pilgrims bound for Mecca. He had built several forts along the sea-shore and entirely disrupted maritime intercourse. He had also struck copper coins (*sikka-i-pul*) and *hons* in the fort of Rajgad. Maharaja Jaswant Singh had endeavoured to suppress him, but without avail. Hence, Raja Jai Singh and Dilir Khan were sent to join the armies already fighting against Shivaji.

Jai Singh's career, as Sarkar has said, 'had been one of undiminished brilliancy from the day when he, an orphan of twelve [now he was 60], received his first appointment in the Mughal army (1617). Since then he had fought under the imperial banner in every part of the empire, from Balkh in Central Asia to Bijapur in the Deccan, from Qandahar in the west to Mungir in the east.....In diplomacy he had attained

to a success surpassing even his victories in the field. Wherever there was a difficult or delicate work to be done, the Emperor had only to turn to Jai Singh. A man of infinite tact and patience, an adept in the ceremonious courtesy of the Muslims, a master of Turki and Persian, besides Urdu and the Rajput dialect, he was an ideal leader of the composite army of Afghans and Turks, Rajputs and Hindustanis that followed the crescent-banner of the sovereign of Delhi... His foresight and political cunning, his smoothness of tongue and cool calculating policy, were in striking contrast with the impulsive generosity, reckless daring, blunt straightfo wardness and impolitic chivalry which we are apt to associate with the Rajput character.'

Jai Singh's coadjutor, Dilir Khan, was also a veteran soldier. His real name was Jalal Khan Daud-zai. He had served under Prince Suleman Shikoh during the war of Succession, and with Mir Jumla in the Assam campaign. He was the founder of Shahjahanabad in Rohilkhand. He was to win further laurels in the present war against Shivaji.

Faced with such generals and such forces as they led, Shivaji and the Marathas had their mettle put to the hardest test yet encountered by them. Jai Singh organized a whirlwind campaign in order to encompass the Marathas from all sides. Casting his net far and wide, the Adil Shah, the petty rajas and zamindars, the Siddis, and even the Europeans, were all enlisted as supporters. Corruption was set a-foot on its nefarious work in the very camp of the Maratha. Purandar, where Shivaji resided, was made the heart and centre of this colossal campaign. When Jai Singh arrived there, writes Cosme da Guarda, 'even Sevagy could not help being frightened. For, besides the 400,000 cavalry, the number of men and animals that follows these armies could neither be credited or ascertained. There went with it 500 elephants, 3 million camels, 10 million oxen of burden, men of useless service and merchants without number.

"...where Death
Was singing and the laughter of the swords,...
...and fall figures strew'd the ground
Like trees in a cyclone." —SRI AUROBINDO

'The first thing that Sevagy did was to tempt this general in the same way as he had done the other. He sent him a very large and very valuable present desiring his friendship. The Raya refused both and ordered to inform Sevagy that he had not come to receive presents but to subdue him; and for his own good, he asked him to yield and avoid many deaths, or he would make him yield by force. This resolution perturbed Sevagy.'

The siege of Purandar was proceeded with. 'The Raya had brought with him a large number of heavy artillery of such a calibre that each cannon was drawn by forty yokes of oxen; but they were of no use for bombarding a fortrees of this kind; for it was not a handiwork of man, but of the author of Nature, and it also had foundations so laid and fortified that they laughed at the balls, wind, and even the thunderbolts. The plain at the top, where the men communed with the stars was more than half-a-league in breadth, provided with food for many years, and the most copious water that after regaling men was precipitated through the hill to fertilise the plants with which it was covered'. The highest point of this fort is 4,564 ft. above sea-level, and more than 2,500 ft. above the plain at its foot. It is really a double fort—Purandar and Vajragad or Rudramal. It was by the seizure of this latter citadel (in 1065), as later on the English were to do in 1817, that Jai Singh made it impossible for the Marathas to retain Purandar.

It was during the defence of this strategic stronghold that Murar Baji, like Baji Deshpande and Tanaji Malusare, laid down his life heroically. Dilir Khan sat down before the fortress like Yama with a grim determination to capture it at any cost. Greatly admiring the gallant resistance of Baji he offered to spare his life if he should submit and accept high appointment in the imperial service. But the valiant Maratha spurned the temptation and continued the fight courageously. A shot from Dilir, however, soon brought down the dauntless and incorruptible Baji. Still the garrison, with the courage worthy of the mother of Brasidas, as Sarkar puts it, continued the struggle undismayed by the fall of their leader saying: 'What though one man Murar Baji is killed? We are as brave as he and we shall fight with equal courage!' That this was

not a vain boast is borne out by Khwafi Khan's testimony to 'the surprises of the enemy, their gallant successes, attacks on dark nights, blocking of roads and difficult passes, and burning of jungles,' etc. which made the task of the Mughals very arduous. But, with all that the Marathas could do, it was an unequal struggle. The resources of the Mughals were vastly superior.

Jai Singh's flying columns were everywhere. His army dispositions were those of a consummate general. He had opened his campaign from Poona on 14 March 1665. The vanguard of the imperialists, with heavy artillery under Dilir Khan, was in the vicinity of Purandar on the 30th. Vajragad (Rudramal) was forced to capitulate on 14 April. On the 25th following a choice division led by renowned captains was ordered to devastate the surrounding regions. The area covered by Rajgad, Simhagad and Rohida was to be utterly desolated without a vestige of cultivation or habitation. Likewise, the villages enclosed between the forts Lohgad, Visapur, Tikona and Tangai were also devastated; much of Balaghat and Painghat was harried. In the neighbourhood of Rohida alone, 50 villages were destroyed towards the end of April. Another month passed and Purandar itself seemed irrevocably doomed. The casualties among the garrison were alarming. The realist in Shivaji anticipated the inevitable. To prolong resistance under such circumstances was to invite annihilation or worse dishonour and captivity for the Maratha families sheltered within the fort. He, therefore, opened negotiations with Jai Singh, on 20 May 1665, through his Panditrao Raghunath Ballal. But Jai Singh insisted on a personal interview with Shivaji. This was at last brought about at 9 A M. on 11 June 1665. Khwafi Khan has recorded the proceedings as follows:—

"When Shivaji entered, the Raja (Jai Singh) rose and seated him near himself. Shivaji then with a thousand signs of shame, clasped his hands and said: 'I have come as a guilty slave to seek forgiveness, and it is for you either to pardon or to kill me at your pleasure. I will make over my great forts, with the country of Konkan, to the Emperor's officers, and I will send you my son to enter the imperial service. As for myself, I hope that after the interval of one year, when

I have paid my respects to the Emperor, I may be allowed, like other servants of the State who exercise authority in their own provinces, to live with my wife and family in a small fort or two. Whenever and wherever my services are required, I will on receiving orders, discharge my duty loyally.'

The Raja cheered him up and sent him to Dilir Khan. 'After direction had been given for the cessation of the siege, 7,000 persons, men, women and children, came out of the fort. All that they could not carry away became the property of Government, and the fort was taken possession of by the forces. Dilir Khan presented Shivaji with a sword, etc. He then took him back to the Raja who presented him with a robe... and renewed his assurances of safety and honourable treatment. Shivaji with ready tact bound on the sword in an instant and promised to render faithful service. When the question about the time Shivaji was to remain under parole and of his return home came under consideration, Raja Jai Singh wrote to the Emperor asking forgiveness for Shivaji and the grant of a robe to him and awaited instructions....

'A mace-bearer arrived with the *firman* and a robe .....and Shivaji was overjoyed at receiving forgiveness and honour. A decision then arose about the forts, and then it was finally settled that out of the 35 forts which he possessed, the keys of 23 should be given up with their revenues amounting to 10 *lacs* of *hons* or 40 *lacs* of *rupees*. Twelve small forts with moderate revenues were to remain in the possession of Shivaji's people. Sambha, his son, a boy of eight years old, in whose name a *mansab* of 5,000 had been granted, at Raja Jai Singh's suggestion, was to proceed to Court with the Raja attended by a suitable retinue. Shivaji himself with his family was to remain in the hills and was to endeavour to restore the prosperity of his ravaged country. Whenever he was summoned on imperial service he was to attend.'

On his being allowed to depart, he received a robe, horse, etc. In addition, Shivaji further undertook, 'If lands yielding 4 *lakhs* of *hons* a year in the lowlands of Konkan (Painghat) and 5 *lakhs* of *hons* a year in the uplands (Balaghat Bijapuri) are granted to me by the Emperor, and I am assured by

an imperial *firman* that the possession of these lands will be confirmed in me after the expected Mughal conquest of Bijapur, then I agree to pay to the Emperor 40 *lakh*s of *hons* in thirteen yearly instalments.'

Since these lands were to be wrested by Shivaji from Bijapur, Jai Singh thought he had cleverly thrown a bone of contention between the two enemies of the Mughals in the Deccan, viz. the Adil Shah and the Marathas. Proud of this achievement, he wrote to the Emperor: 'This policy will result in a threefold gain,—1st we get 40 *lakhs* of *hons* or 2 *crores* of rupees; 2nd Shivaji will be alienated from Bijapur; 3rd the imperial army will be relieved from the arduous task of campaigning in these two broken and jungly regions, as Shivaji will himself undertake the task of expelling the Bijapuri garrisons from them.' In return Shivaji also agreed to join the Mughals in the invasion of Bijapur with 2,000 cavalry and 7,000 infantry under his own command. 'Now that Adil Shah and Qutb Shah have united in mischief', Jai Singh wrote to Aurangzeb, 'it is necessary to win Shivaji's heart by all means and send him to North India to have audience with Your Majesty.'

The reason for such a settlement may not be entirely attributed to Jai Singh's magnanimity. Khwafi Khan's references to the embarrassment caused by the guerilla tactics of the Marathas and Dilir Khan's apprehensions expressed to Jai Singh seem also to indicate that the Mughal generals considered discretion the better part of valour. 'I will not say anything more now,' Dilir said, 'this campaign will end by ruining both you and me.'

Shivaji was prevailed upon by 'a thousand devices' to undertake a visit to Agra, which he reluctantly accepted. He reached Agra on 11 May 1666 and was received by Kumar Ram Singh, son of Jai Singh Kachwah. Aurangzeb gave him audience the very next day; but treated him with such calculated insult that Shivaji was terribly upset. Kumar Ram Singh was obliged to give an undertaking to the Emperor that 'if Shivaji escapes or does any mischief, the Kumar will take the responsibility.' Shivaji was consequently very anxious that Ram Singh did not come into trouble on account of himself if possible. His enemies were persuading Aurangzeb

'either to kill Shiva or to confine him in a fortress or to throw him into prison.' But Ram Singh having come to know of this protested to Muhmad Amin Khan; 'It has been decided by His Majesty to kill Shivaji; but he has come here under a guarantee of personal safety. So it is proper that the Emperor should kill me first, and then only, after I am dead, do with Shivaji what he likes.' Nevertheless, Shivaji was ordered to be transferred to the custody of Radandaz Khan, a reckless favourite of Aurangzeb, evidently to facilitate the nefarious design. Shivaji then tried to get out of Aurangzeb's clutches through diplomatic negotiations; but was firmly told that he must not visit anybody, 'not even go to the Kumar's house'. Subsequently, Shivaji was placed under the direct surveillance of the Kotwal, Fulad Khan. Thus freed from his moral responsibility towards Ram Singh Shivaji effected his dramatic escape from Agra, after having tried various other stunts, during the night of 17 August 1666. A letter of 18th August states, 'This morning Shivaji was found to have fled away from Agra'.

All these details are now confirmed by the fresh evidence recently brought to light by Sir Jadunath Sarkar. 'We must, therefore, now discard as pure fiction,' he writes, 'all the stories told by Khafi Khan and others about Shivaji's romantic adventures during his flight through Allahabad, Benares and Gaya, and even Jagannath Puri, according to a Maratha fabulist'. Sarkar now holds that Shivaji must have returned to Rajgad on 12 Sept. 1666 by a more direct route than hitherto believed. His revised opinion rests upon a few statements in the Persian *Akhbarats* and the Dingal letters now published by him. An *Akhbarat* dated Delhi 15 Nov. 1666 appears to state that the Emperor had learnt from a news-letter from Aurangabad that 'a son has been born in the house of the wretch Shiva, and that he himself is ailing.' Further, a Dingal letter of Ballu Sah *diwan Kalyandas*, dated Delhi 19 Nov. 1666, is said to refer to 'public rumours now confirmed by news-letters reaching the Emperor' that Shivaji after having slipped out of Agra 'at midnight' reached his fort in 25 days; and that '*his son who accompanied him had died on the way*!' Again, the same purveyors of news reported the birth of another son to Shivaji at Rajgad, adding that for many days Shivaji lay ill...thus has the *waqianavis* written.'

From these references Sir Jadunath concludes that Shivaji must have reached Rajgad on 12 September, and that the imperial spies must have probably got the news in the middle of October following: 'the rigid time limit of 25 days,' he states, 'by a rather bow-shaped route, bars out all these (earlier described) anecdotes as impossible.'

The date, hitherto accepted by Sarkar, of Shivaji's reaching home was 20 Nov. 1666. As a variant he has cited the *Shivapur Yadi* mentioning 10 December, in the *Shivaji and His Times* (chronology at the end). The Jedhe *shakavali* and *Karina*, which correctly record *Sravan Krishna* 12 *Prabhav* 1588 *Saka* (17 Aug. 1666) as the date of Shivaji's escape from Agra 'in a basket,' also state that Shivaji returned to Rajgad with Sambhaji on *Margasirsha sukla* 5 of the same year (20 Nov. 1666).* These local records indicating the later arrival of Shivaji in Maharashtra appear to us more reliable than the more distant Persian and Dingal news-letters. The allusion to Sambhaji's death on the way must serve to put us on our guard. Besides the letter of Jai Singh 15 Nov. 1666, quoted by Sarkar in his *Shivaji and His Times*, whose authenticity we have no reason to doubt, militates against his latest view: '*There is no trace or news of the fugitive Shiva.*' complains Jai Singh. '*My days are passing in distraction and anxiety. I have sent trusty spies to get news of Shiva.*' What a relief the *Akhbarats* and Dingal letters might have brought to Jai Singh had their writers taken him into their confidence!'

* Cf. D. V. Kale, *op-cit.*, suggesting that, between the two discrepant dates, Shivāji must have been actually at Raigad; but, since he was ailing due to the arduous adventure, for political reasons, the fact was not disclosed immediately.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHHATRAPATI

नायं राजा मनूष्योऽस्ति किंतु साक्षाच्छिवः स्वयं ।
तथापि भक्तिपाशेन वश्यश्छत्रपतेरहं ॥

—NISCHALAPURI.

THE seven years that elapsed between Shivaji's return from Agra and his coronation as *Chhatrapati* at Raigad (5 June 1674) were the most momentous years of his life. From a constructive and creative point of view they constituted the most fruitful in the history of the Marathas. The arrangements that Shivaji made for the upkeep of his possessions (such as were left to him by the treaty of Purandar), during his absence at Agra, have rightly been characterised by Sarkar as 'a masterpiece of forethought and organization.' They revealed that Shivaji was as great a statesman as he was a strategist. For all his thrilling adventures the future of Maharashtra might have been as sterile as that of Macedonia after the death of Alexander, but for the solid foundations which Shivaji well and truly laid for the greater glory of his race, during the short interval separating his return home from Agra (20 Nov. 1666) and his second raid of Surat (17 Oct. 1670). The *Rajyabhisheka* which took place on Friday 12 *Jyestha sukla* of the *Shaka* year Ananda (5 June 1674) was but the grand culmination of a career which evoked admiration and wonder even from his enemies.

On his part Shivaji had scrupulously fulfilled all the terms of his treaty with Aurangzeb. Not only did he hand over to the Mughals all the forts demanded by them in the agreement, but also actively joined them in the Bijapur campaign (20 Nov. 1665) with 9,000 Maratha troops. In recognition of this assistance Aurangzeb sent him a letter of praise, a robe of honour and a jewelled dagger. In the discharge of his obligations Shivaji had even to fight against his own half-brother Vyankoji who was a loyal supporter of Bijapur. Though Netaji Palkar wavered for a while and went over to

the enemy, he was soon persuaded to return and was rewarded with Rs. 38,000 cash, a *mansab* of 5,000 and a *jagir* in 'the settled and lucrative old territory of the empire'.* Finally, Shivaji yielded to Jai Singh's importunities and went to Agra with what result we have already noticed. Not only Aurangzeb, who was his lifelong and inveterate enemy, but even Jai Singh at one moment, under the chagrin of personal disappointment and discomfiture, yielded to the temptation of seeking to end Shivaji's life ignominiously despite the plighted troth of a Rajput for the safety of his person. Nevertheless Shivaji had borne himself with courage and dignity in the most trying circumstances and escaped from 'the jaws of death' by dint of his own resourcefulness. The veteran Jai Singh was borne down by anxiety, humiliation and misrepresentations at Court, and died at Burhampur (on 4 July 1667), cursing like Cardinal Wolsey the base ingratitude of kings. His place in the Deccan was taken by the easygoing Muazzam whose unseemly and suicidal quarrels with the capable but insubordinate Dilir Khan afforded golden opportunities to Shivaji to recover his lost dominion. Aurangzeb's preoccupation with the suppression of the Yusufzai rebellion at Peshawar (March 1667) compelled him to acquiesce in a truce with the Marathas negotiated by the nerveless Muazzam and Jaswant Singh. A letter of Prince Muazzam, dated 6 March 1668, informed Shivaji that the Emperor had conferred on him the title of *Rajah* and that his other demands were under consideration. Sambhaji was restored to his *mansabdari* of 5,000 and was sent to Aurangabad as Shivaji's representative along with the devoted Pratap Rao Gujar and Niraji Raoji. According to the Jedhe *Shakavali*, Shivaji himself went to Aurangabad where he interviewed Jaswant Singh on *Kartik Krishna* 13 Monday of the Shaka year *Plavanga* 1589:'Next day he left Aurangabad on horseback for Rajgadh.' This truce lasted till *Pauṣ, Saumya* 1591 Shaka (i.e. from 4 Nov. 1667 to Dec. 1669), when Pratap Rao and Anand Rao returned to Rajgad along with Sambhaji.

Shivaji was not hibernating during the interval of peace, though the English factors at Karwar wrote to Surat (16 Sept.

* Netaji during the period of his desertion had become a convert to Islam. Shivaji got him re-admitted to Hinduism

1668): The country all about at present is in great tranquillity;' and on 9 March 1669, 'Our fear of Sevagy this yeare is pretty well over, hee not using to stirr soe late in the yeare ... Sevagy is at Rajahgur, and very quiett, as alsoe is all the country round about us,' etc. The details of his constructive work of organization of the State he was building we shall consider in our final chapter. At the time of his departure for Agra, Sabhasad tells us, Shivaji had entrusted Rajgad and the other forts to the charge of his mother, Moro Pant *Peshva*, Nilo Pant *Majumdar*, and Netaji Palkar *Sarnobat*. When he returned from the North, Matushri and the *karkuns* and the soldiers in the army and the people in the forts and the militia were all pleased and held festivities. Preparations were then made for the recovery of the 27 forts ceded to the Mughals. Shivaji said to Moro Pant *Peshva*, Nilo Pant *Majumdar* and Annaji *surnis*: 'You should capture these forts by diplomacy and exertion'; and the Raje said personally to the Mavales, 'Capture ye the forts.' Thereupon there was a *Hazari* of the Mavales—Tanaji Malusare by name-who made the offer: 'I shall take the fort Kondana.' This incident may be taken as marking the end of the truce with the Mughals, and the beginning of Shivaji's fresh offensive. According to the Jedhe *Shakavali* Kondana—thereafter called Simhagad—was captured on Friday *Magh Krishna* 9 (4 Feb. 1670). Though Sabhasad assigns no date for this event, he mentions it as the first episode since Shivaji's return. Much as Simhagad stands out physically silhouetted against the southern sky of Poona today, Tanaji's heroic exploit has indelibly impressed itself on the racial memory of the Marathas as an achievement of the first magnitude; and well it might, for it was here that the Koli Nag Nak had first opened the Maratha resistance to the Muslim advance under Muhammad Tughlaq. The *Powada* or ballad of Tanaji by Tulsidas is familiar to every Maratha to this day. Our hearts throb as the Shahirs sing:

'And ye Marathas brave! give ear,
Tanaji's exploits crowd to hear.
Where from your whole dominion wide
Shall such another be supplied ?

O'er seven and twenty castles high
His sword did wave victoriously.
The iron-years are backward roll'd
His fame restores the age of gold;
Whene'er this song ye sing and hear,
Sins are forgiven, and heaven is near!'

'In this manner,' simply writes Sabhasad, 'was Kondana captured first. Then Moro Pant *Peshva* and Nilo Pant and Annaji Pant and the Mavales, with similar distinction took twenty-six forts in four months. The Raje went on governing his kingdom, recapturing what forts had been ceded by the treaty.' According to the *Shakavali* Purandar was recaptured by Nilo Pant *Majumdar* on Tuesday *Phalgun Krishna* 12 (8 March 1670); Mughal territory was invaded and Junnar besieged by Shivaji in *Bhadrapad Sadharan* 1592 *Shaka* (August 1670); Surat was looted for the second time on *Kartik Shukla* 1 (4 Oct. 1670); and on 14 of the same month (17 Oct.) on his way back from Surat, he fought with Daud Khan near Dindori. In *Jyestha Virodhikrit* 1593 *Shaka* (June 1671) Sahler was besieged by Bahadur Khan and Dilir Khan, but they raised the siege in October the same year and retired to Aurangabad. Prince Muazzam left for Delhi in *Magh* (Feb. 1682),—evidently to report the gravity of the situation to the Emperor.

The circumstances leading to these hostile activities on the part of Shivaji need to be looked into more closely. Aurangzeb ever suspicious by nature, feared collusion between his son Muazzam and the Marathas. Consequently, he ordered the arrest of the Maratha agents of Shivaji at Aurangabad (Pratap Rao and Niraji Pant). But like the five members of Parliament attempted to be apprehended by Charles I of England, these Maratha Sardars slipped out with their troops before action was taken against them. To make matters worse, Aurangzeb, in sore straits for money, also ordered the seizure of Shivaji's estates in Berar, ostensibly in lieu of the *lakh* of rupees advanced by Jai Singh for Shivaji's expenses *en route* to Agra. 'The rupture, inevitable in any case,' writes Sarkar, 'was precipitated by financial causes. Retrenchment of expenditure had now become a pressing necessity to Aurangzeb, and he ordered the Mughal army in the Deccan

to be greatly reduced.' On 11 December 1669 the Emperor received intimation of four Maratha captains of Shivaji's *biradari* having deserted from the imperial camp. On 26 January 1670 Aurangzeb ordered Dilir Khan to hasten to Aurangabad and Daud Khan to run to the assistance of Prince Muazzam.

Though Shivaji was never lacking in incentives to act briskly and vigorously against the Mughals, further zeal was imparted to his arms by Aurangzeb's fanatical actions at this time. 'The archrebel Sevagee,' observes an English contemporary, is again engaged in arms against Orangshah, who out of blind zeal for reformation hath demolished many of the Gentiles temples, and forceth many to turn Musslemins.' The Jedhe *Shakavali* also records that in *Bhadrapad* or August 1669 Aurangzeb started religious persecution at Kasi and broke temples. The breach with the Mughals, according to Sarkar, occurred early in January or a fortnight earlier, though he says 'There is no evidence for holding that Shivaji broke the peace with Aurangzeb as a protest against the latter's general order for temple destruction (9 April 1669), though the two events are placed immediately after one another in an English factory letter (Foster xiii. 256) and *Jedhe*.' It cannot, however, be asserted that Aurangzeb's religious persecutions had no repercussions in Maharashtra.

In a *firman* issued to Abdul Hasan, dated 28 February 1659, Aurangzeb wisely directed: 'Our royal command is that you should direct that in future no person shall in unlawful ways interfere with or disturb the Brahmans and other Hindus resident in those places.' But later, on 20 November 1665, he reversed this policy and declared: 'In Ahmadabad and other *parganahs* of Gujarat in the days before my accession temples were destroyed by my order. They have been repaired and idol-worship has been resumed. *Carry out the former order*.' The *Maasir-i Alamgiri* enthusiastically appreciative of this bigotry observes: 'On the 17th *Zi-l Kada* 1079 H. (18 April 1669) it reached the ear of His Majesty, the Protector of the Faith, that in the provinces of Thatta, Multan and Benares, but especially in the latter, foolish Brahmans were in the habit of expounding frivolous books in their schools, and that students and learners, Musulmans as

well as Hindus, went there, even from long distances, led by a desire to become acquainted with the wicked sciences they taught. The Director of the Faith, consequently, issued *orders to all the governors of provinces to destroy with a willing hand the schools and temples of the infidels: and they were strictly enjoined to put an entire stop to the teaching and practising of idolatrous forms of worship.* On the 15th *Rabi'ull akhar* it was reported to his religious Majesty ... that, in obedience to orders, the government officers had destroyed the temple of Bishnath at Benares... In the month of *Ramazan* 1080 H. (Dec. 1669), in the 13th year of the reign, *this justice-loving monarch, the constant enemy of tyrants, commanded the destruction of the Hindu temples of Mathura* known by the name of Dehra Kesu Rai, and soon that stronghold of falsehood was levelled with the ground. On the same spot was laid, at great expense, the foundation of a great mosque. The den of inequity was thus destroyed... 33 *lacs* were expended on this work. Glory be to God who has given us the faith of Islam that, in the reign of the destroyer of false gods, an undertaking so difficult of accomplishment has been brought to a successful termination... This vigorous support given to the true faith was a severe blow to the arrogance of the *Rajas*... The richly jewelled idols taken from the pagan temples were transferred to Agra and there placed beneath the steps leading to the Nawab Begum Sahib's mosque, in order that they might ever be pressed under foot by the true believers. Mathura changed its name into Islamabad.'

Aurangzeb's frenzy continued for several years Cart loads of idols were taken also from Jodhpur to the capital to be trodden upon by the faithful. The *Jaziya* was reimposed, Hindu fairs and festivals were prohibited. Hindus were forbidden to wear arms and fine dresses, and to ride well-bred horses, elephants, and to go in palanquins. 'According to the law 2½ p.c. should be taken from Musalmans and 5 p.c. from Hindus (customs duty).' In 1671 it was ordered that all rent-collectors in crown-lands ought to be Muslims. Provincial governors were also called upon to dismiss their Hindu head clerks and accountants and to replace them by the true believers. The dismissed employers sought service under Shivaji, in some cases at least. In North India this policy

antagonised the Rajputs and drove the Jats, Satnamis and Sikhs into open revolt. In Maharashtra one iconoclastic officer found his task too strenuous : 'The hatch-men of the government,' he complained, 'in the course of my marching do not get sufficient strength and power to destroy and raze the temples of the infidels that meet the eye on the way.' Hence Aurangzeb ordered : 'You should appoint an orthodox Inspector (*darogha*) who may afterwards destroy them at leisure and dig up their foundations.' Ironically, however, this *darogha* happened to be the Maratha, and he dug up the foundations of Aurangzeb's Empire !

Addressing the imperial officers, Shivaji wrote in effect : 'For the last three years ye have been under orders from Aurangzeb to seize my country and forts. Ye are reminded that even the steed of unimaginable exertion is too weak to gallop over this hard country, and that its conquest is difficult. My home is unlike the forts of Kaylani and Bidar, and is not situated on a spacious plain. It has lofty mountain ranges, 200 leagues in length and 40 leagues in depth : everywhere there are *nalas* difficult to ford ; and sixty forts of rare strength have been built,—some on the sea-coast. Afzal Khan came against me on behalf of the Adil Shah and perished... Why do not you report to the Emperor what has happened, so that the same fate may not overtake you ? *Amir-ul Umara* Shaista Khan was sent against these sky-kissing ranges and abysmal valleys. He laboured hard for three long years and bluffed to the Emperor that I was going to be subdued in the shortest time. But at last, as all false men deserve, he encountered a terrible disaster and went away in disgrace. *It is my duty to guard my land :*

> The wise should beware of this river of blood,
> No man can ford, in safety, its terrible flood.

This was not a vain and empty boast. Its force was brought home to the Mughals during the campaings of 1670 and the succeeding years. On 4 February 1670 Kondana (Simhagad) was captured by the heroic sacrifice of Tanaji. On 8 March Purandar was retaken by Nilo Pant. A few days later, the *qila'dar* of Chandod was held up in his fort and the town was plundered yielding Rs. 40,000, an elephant and

twelve horses. At Kalyan-Bhiwandi, Uzbeg Khan (thanedar) was killed and the place captured. Ludi Khan the *fauzdar* of Konkan was beaten and put to flight (March 1670). The *fauzdar* of Nanded deserted his post in a panic. Though there were temporary setbacks at Parner, Junnar and Mahuli, the position was soon retrieved. By the end of April 1670 the Marathas had plundered 51 villages in the vicinity of Ahmadnagar, Junnar and Parenda. Lohgad was captured in May, and Hindola, Karnala and Rohida in June. On 16 June Mahuli was recaptured after slaying its new commandant, Alawardi Beg, and 200 of the garrison.

All this time, Prince Muazzam and Dilir Khan were engaged in an unseemly quarrel, almost amounting to civil war. Aurangzeb deputed Iftikhar Khan in March 1670 to compose their differences; but 'he played the Jack on both sides' and added fuel to the fire. Muazzam complained of Dilir's defiant conduct, and the plunder of imperial villages by his Pathan troops. 'The latter charge was borne out by the reports of the news-writers. The Khan was actually chased across the Tapti by Muazzam and Jaswant Singh with all the available Mughal troops, calling upon Shivaji to come to their aid!'

The weakness of the imperial position, betrayed by the above incidents, might have been apparent even to observers less acute than Shivaji. To the astute Maratha leader it offered too tempting an opportunity for aggressive action. Surat once more attracted his attention. A letter of 10 July 1670 observes: 'The notable progress of Sevagy in his conquest of Mauly, etc., now in the blustering time of raines, makes his name yet more terrible to Surrat. Insomuch that the Governor is allarummed from Brampore, Orangabaud, Mooler and other places, to expect and prepare for an assault, so that this town is under no small feare.'

The English had put up a brave show in 1664, but their valiant President, Sir George Oxenden, had died on 14 July 1669. Again they were called upon to prepare themselves for the preservation of the honour and repute of the English nation and security of the Hon'ble Companys house at Surratt... Wherefore it was propounded Debated and Concluded to send order to the Deputy Governor &ca at Bombay that

they spare us... 35 or 40 White Portugall souldiers who have been trayned up & are actually in service so that the charge will be but little & that onely for Dyett (duty) the time they are in Surratt.'

Shivaji actually appeared in Surat for the second time on 3 October 1670—'whereupon the President and Councell resolved to send the Hon'ble Companys treasures which is on shoare, some on board the *Berkely Castle*, the rest on board the *Loyal Oxenden*.' On the third day (5 October), Shivaji suddenly left Surat, though no Mughal army was near. An official inquiry ascertained, says Sarkar, 'that Shivaji had carried off 66 *lakhs* of Rupees' worth of booty from Surat,—viz., cash, pearls, and other articles worth 53 *lakhs* from the city itself, and 13 *lakhs* worth from Nawal Sahu and Hari Sahu and a village near Surat.'

According to Abbe Carre, 'Partly in different wars he (Shivaji) had waged, and partly in the Court, he had exhausted his treasures. This is what made him to resolve to plunder Surat for a second time.' He also states: 'As the purpose of Sevagy was only to make fun of the Great Mogol, he did not exert himself further; and did no harm to the people.' The French, the Dutch and the English were given 'a timely notice to display their standards on the top of their terraces that they may be saved thereby from the fury of the soldiers.' The English lost one soldier, the French 'two black servants.' and the Dutch none: 'We could only oppose to Sivasi's hordes 35 men in all, but they did not molest us.'

The English President, Gerald Aungier writes: 'The King (Aurangzeb) being sensible of the great danger his chiefe port was in, ordered downe Bahadur Cann, the viceroy of Ahmedabad, with 3,000 horse, to protect Surrat, whose arrivall eased us of the present feare, but cost us, the French and Dutch and all the Merchants, deare for our protection in presents to him (the viceroy) which is a civil kind of plunder demanded by these great Umbrawes as a tribute due to them; wee at first intended him a small acknowledgment of 2 or 300 rupees worth in some European rarities, but the Merchants of the Towne having presented him high, and the Dutch Commandore, contrary to his private promise to Gerald Aungier, made him a Piscash of 4,000 rupees, we were forced for peace

sake to please him with a present to the value of rupees 1,700 in imitation of the Indians that worship the Devil that he (the viceroy) doe them hurt, for indeed we expect little good from him, but the French gallantly exceeded all compare, for their chief Directeur the Here Caron made him a present to the value of Rups. 10,000 in horses, rich tapestry, brass guns &c., which made no small noyse in Towne, and caused different censures, some commanding his generosity, others with reason taxing his ill husbandry.

'The 3rd October Sevagy's army approached the walls and, after a slight assault, the Defendants fled under the shelter of the castle Gunns, and they possest themselves of the whole Towne, some few houses excepted (English, French, Dutch, Persian and Turkish) which stood on their defence...

'The enemy having taken the Tartar Seray could from thence more safely ply their shot at our house, for which they prepared themselves, but finding our menn resolute on their defence, they held up their bands desiring a Parley... The Captain tould Mr. Master, the Rajah or Sevagy was much enraged that wee had killed soe many of his menn and was resolved on revenge... but Mr. Master stood in so resolute a posture that the Captain, not willing to hazard his men's lives, sent some person to him, demanding a present, though to noe great vallue.

'Mr. Master thought it not imprudence to secure our goods, together with soe many mens lives at soe reasonable a rate, and therefore by advise of those with him, being a Merchant of Rajapore, fell into discourse with him touching our leaving that Factory, asking the reason why wee did not send our people to trade there as formerly.

'Mr. Master answered that it was Sevagy's fault and not ours, for he had plundered the company's house, imprisoned their servants, and whereas since that time he had given satisfaction to severall persons whom he had robbed, yet he had not taken care to satisfy the English the losse they had susteyned; to which he answered that *Sevagy did much desire our return to Rajapore and would doe very much to give us satisfaction.*

'This gratefull discourse being over, the Present was sent by two of our servants who were conveighed to Sevagy's tent

without the Towne; he sent for them and *received them with the Piscash in a very kind manner, telling them that the English and he were good friends, and putting his hand into their hands, he told them that he would doe the English no wrong,* and that this giving his hand was better than any cowl to oblige them thereunto.

'Before your servants were returned to your house, Sevagy had called his Army out of the Towne, to the wonder of all men, in regard no enemy was neare,nor the noyse of any army to oppose him; but he had gott plunder enough and thought it prudence to secure himself, and that when he marched away he sent a letter to the Officers and chiefe Merchants, the substance whereof was that, if they did not pay him 12 *lakhs* of rupees yearly Tribute he would return the next yeare and burne downe the remayning part of the Towne.'

The account closes with a few observations which indicate how lightly the English came off out of this second sack of Surat. They made representations to the Emperor 'soe that wee have a just right to demand the whole losse from the King and have taken such an effectual course by sending our remonstrances to the Court and improving our interest with the Shawbunder, cozzy and Merchants whome wee have protected in this danger, that *wee trust in God you will be no losers by it in the end.*'

The most important outcome of the raids on Surat was that the constant alarms they created for years 'putt all trade into disorder.' There was renewed panic in February and October 1672, in September 1673, October 1674, and December 1679. Shivaji disorganized the imperial trade with the minimum effort and maximum gain to himself. When Muazzam heard of this disaster, he despatched Daud Khan post haste from Burhanpur, to intercept the Marathas returning from Surat. Shivaji had by then entered Baglana and plundered the environs of Mulher fort. The pursuing Mughals met the Marathas at Vani Dindori (15 miles n. of Nasik; 28 miles s. w. of Chandod) on the Ghats. The result was a 'severe action' as Sabhasad has called it. For two *prahars* the battle raged. The Marathas fought *ne plus ultra*, and killed 3,000 of the enemy, took 3 to 4,000 horses, and two *wazirs* (officers). It was a resounding triumph for the Marathas.

Pratap Rao (*Sarnobat*), Vyankoji Datto and Anand Rao distinguished themselves in this action (17 Oct. 1670).

Encouraged by these successes and enriched with the booty secured, Shivaji launched a major campaign in Baglana, Khandesh and Berar. His forces numbered about 20,000. Capturing the forts of Ahivant, Markand, Raval and Javla (in Baglana), he rapidly advanced to the vicinity of Burhanpur (Khandesh) and plundered Bahadurpur (2 miles from Burhanpur). But his most striking exploit was, however, the sack of Karanja (Berar) where he secured booty worth one *crore* of rupees in gold, silver and finery. Many prominent and prosperous men were taken captive at Karanja and Nandurbar, and held to ransom or *chauth*—perhaps the first instance of its collection in Mughlai.

The next exploit of Shivaji was the investment of Salher (c. 5 January 1671). Like Humayun at Chanderi, Shivaji personally scaled the fortress with a rope-ladder while 20,000 of his troops, horse and foot, surrounded the stronghold. Fatullah Khan, commandant of the fort, fell fighting. But in other places the Mughal officers were regaling themselves with song and dance: there were daily entertainments in the houses of the grandees (including Mahabat Khan who was specially deputed by the Emperor to tackle Shivaji). There were no less than 400 dancing girls specially imported from the North for the delectation of the *umara*. When reinforcements came, or more vigorous officers like Bahadur Khan and Dilir Khan were despatched in order to jinger up the resistance, they indulged in fitful and frenzied massacres, as at Poona where all above the age of nine were slaughtered in one raid in December 1671.

The imperialists tried to recapture Salher (January-February 1672) with disastrous consequences. 'A great battle took place,' writes Sabhasad. 'For 4 *prahars* of the day the fighting lasted. Mughals, Pathans, Rajputs and Rohilas fought with artillery-swivels carried on elephants and camels. As the battle raged, such dust arose that for a distance of 3 *koses* square, friend could not be distinguished from foe. Elephants were killed; 10,000 men on the two sides fell dead. Countless horses, camels and elephants as well. There was a deluge of blood... The horses captured alive alone number-

ed 6,000. One hundred elephants were also taken, and 6,000 camels. Goods, treasures, gold and jewels, clothes and carpets beyond calculation came into the Raje's hands. 22 *wazirs* of note were taken prisoner. Ikhlas Khan and Bahlol Khan themselves were captured. In this manner was the whole *subah* destroyed.

Sabhasad gives the names of a dozen Maratha *sardars* who distinguished themselves in this battle and adds, 'Similarly did Mavale soldiers and *sardars* toil hard. The commanders, Moro Pant *Peshva* and Pratap Rao *Sarnobat*, both distinguished themselves by personal acts of valour; so also did Surya Rao Kankade (a *panch-hazari*) who was struck down by a canon-ball... Other heroes of note also fell. Victory was won after such fighting.' The news was flashed to the Raje and the cannon boomed and sugar was distributed. Gold wristlets were put on the arms of the *jasuds* who brought the news. Immense wealth was given to Pratap Rao *Sarnobat*, Moro Pant *Peshva*, Anand Rao and Vyankoji Pant, in reward. The other officers and *Mavales* were also similarly rewarded. 'Bahlol Khan and the Nawab and *wazirs* who had been taken prisoner were dismissed with horses and robes.' Dilir Khan who was four marches away from Salher at that moment, fled. With pardonable pride, Sabhasad observes : 'The Badshah at Delhi felt much distressed at the bad news. For three days he did not come out into the Hall of Public Audience. So sad was he that he said : 'It seems God has taken away the Badshahi from the Musulmans and conferred it on Shivaji.'

The English records also confirm the victory in which the Marathas 'forced the two generals, who with their armies had entered into Sevagy's country, *to retreat with shame and loss.*' But the Persian records are silent on this.

On 5 June 1672 a large Maratha force under Moro Trimbak Pingle captured Jauhar (100 miles from Surat towards Nasik) from its Koli chieftain Vikramshah, and carried away treasure worth 17 *lakhs* of rupees. Ramnagar (Dharampur) was likewise taken in July, and its raja, Somshah, forced to seek refuge under the Portuguese at Daman. The annexation of these two important places brought the Marathas within 60 miles south of Surat which was perpetually placed on tenter hooks.

An English record of 26 October 1672 states : 'This day news being brought to Surat of a great army of Sevagee being come as near as Ramnagar and that 4 of the King's *Umbraws* with 4 Regiments of horse had deserted the King's service and revolted to Sevagee, the town took the allarme and the shroffs to whom we had sold the Company's treasure, who had weighed a considerable part of it, and paid in about 30,000 rupees on the accounts, refused to carry it out of the house.'

The principal of the *umara* referred to in the above statement were Jadhav Rao Deccani (a great-grand-son of Lukhji) and Siddi Halal, both of whom, being defeated in the Nasik district, joined Shivaji between July and October 1672. Then Shivaji made a peremptory demand for *chauth* from Surat: '*as your Emperor has forced me to keep an army for the defence of my people and country, that army must be paid by his subjects.*' The governor of Surat made this a pretext for taxing his Hindu subjects and pocketed their contribution !

While Surat was trembling under these tribulations, Shivaji suddenly turned towards Berar and Telingana. This raid was no part of his maior campaign, but only intended to create diversions with a nuisance value. Perhaps it was also his intention to reconnoitre and test the enemy's forces. Certainly it served to keep the Mughals guessing as to his plans and strategy. If Shivaji met with a reverse here and there, during such desultory action, he also came by some random booty.

To meet the situation created by the Maratha raids during 1673, Bahadur Khan, the new viceroy and c-in-c. of the Mughal forces in the Deccan, set up his H. Q. at Pedgaum on the Bhima (8 miles south of Chamar gunda). Shivaji therefore marched into Bijapur territory where the death of Ali Adil Shah II (24 Nov. 1672) created tempting opportunities. Ali's successor, Sikandar, was a boy of four summers. Khawas Khan, the Abyssinian, had assumed dictatorial authority as Regent, and thereby evoked the jealousy of other officers. The resulting tussle for power created confusion in the Adilshahi kingdom and made it vulnerable to Maratha attacks. On 6 March 1673 two of Shivaji's captains, Kondaji Farzand and Annaji Pant marched against Panhala. Under

cover of night, like Tanaji at Simhagad, Kondaji scaled the steeper side of the fortress and surprised its garrison. The incident has been vividly described by Jayaram Pinde in his *Parnala-parvata grahanakhyanam*. In view of Shivaji's earlier discomfiture at that place and its colourful antecedents, this victory added a new feather to his cap. It was followed up by the capture of Parli on 1 April and of Satara on 27 July. Pratap Rao drove away Bahlol Khan (Bijapuri general) after a desperaté struggle at Umrani (36 miles from Bijapur city), in the middle of April 1673. The doughty Pathan, however, returned to the fray and kept the Marathas engaged, with better results, from June-August. But both Bijapur and Golkonda soon realized the expediency of making it up with Shivaji, in the face of the common enemy, viz., the Mughal.

'It is confirmed to us from Choule and other parts,' write the English factors in October 1673, 'that overtures of peace and closely prosecuted betwixt the King of Vizapore and Sevagee who hath a considerable army ready of horse and foote and thitherto maintaines his frontiers against the Mogull and Bullole Choune, and its generally concluded that the Kings of Bijapore and Golcondah do covertly furnish him with men and money, and that he also covertly fees the Generall and Commanders of the Mogulls Army which hath qualified their heat against him, soe its thought that noe great action will be performed between them this yeare, yet the preparation Sewagee makes causeth us to believe that either he expects to be assaulted or designes to make some notable attempt in the King's country.' Another letter (Gerald Aungier's) dated 16 September, 1673 says: 'Sevagee bears himself up manfully against all his enemies... and though it is probable that the Mogulls Armv may fall into his country this yeare, and Ballol Chaune on the other side, yet neither of them can stay long for provisions, and his flying army will constantly keep them in allarme; nor is it either their design to destroy Sevagee totally, for the *Umaras* maintain a politic war to their own profit at the King's charge, and never intend to prosecute it violently so as to end it.'

One of the unfortunate happenings connected with this phase of Shivaji's war in Bijapur territory was the loss of

Pratap Rao Gujar, in February 1674. Shivaji had taunted him for having let go Bahlol Khan at Umrani in April last. 'Go with your army,' he said, 'and win a decisive victory. Otherwise never show your face to me again!' The valiant but sensitive general literally carried out this mandate. On 24 February 1674 at Nesari, 'in the narrow gorge between two hills,' he charged like the Light Brigade at Balaklava and rushed 'into the jaws of death' followed only by six faithful horsemen. The gallant seven drowned themselves in a river of blood: 'There's was not to reason why; there's was not to make reply; there's was but to do and die,—though some one had blundered!' But the disaster was retrieved by Anand Rao, his lieutenant, by a daring attack on Sampgaum in Kanara (20 miles from Bankapur), in March following. He captured treasures worth 150,000 *hons*, horses, 2 elephants and much other booty. Bahlol Khan and Khizr Khan, with 2,000 horse and many foot-soldiers, tried in vain to intercept him. On 8 April Shivaji held a grand review of his troops at Chiplun and appointed Hamsaji Mohite as *Sarnobat* in place of the deceased hero Pratap Rao Gujar. 'Finding him a very intelligent, brave, patient and cautious soldier,' writes Sabhasad, 'Shivaji conferred on him the title of Hambir Rao. Bounties were lavishly distributed among the soldiers.'

Late in January 1674 Dilir Khan had tried to assail Shivaji in the Konkan, but as the English noted, 'received a rout by Shivaji and lost 1,000 of his Pathans.' Shivaji too lost 5 or 600 men.

By now it was evident that this son of a Bijapuri noble (Shahji Bhosle) though described by his enemies as a marauder and free-booter, had virtually become a King except in name. Even the title of *Raja* had been seeured by him diplomatically from the Mughal Emperor than whom there was no greater sovereign in India. To set the *imprimatur* of legality over all he did, and also to win the prestige of a crowned monarch, Shivaji had only to ceremonially translate his *de facto* power into *de jure* sovereignty: and this coping stone he decided to lay over the edifice of his great achievements up to 1674. Rajgad was the capital he chose for the impressive ceremonial as well as to be the seat of his government thereafter.

It was centrally situated in the heart of his territories. Nearly equidistant from Poona, Bombay and Satara, it had a political and military, no less than commercial value all its own. Detached from the Sayadri, but elevated above the Konkan, Raigad is removed from, yet served by the sea on account of its nearness to Mahad which had considerable trade importance in those days. Strategically, it was protected from direct attack by Bijapur as well as the Mughals; but from its position in the Maval country and nearness to the sea, Shivaji could ideally direct all his military and maritime operations. From a religious point of view, the place was twice blessed by the shrine of Parashuram at Chiplun and that of Bhavani at Pratapgad. Khwafi Khan has the following interesting observations to make about Raigad.

'When Shivaji had satisfied himself of the security of Raigarh, his old retreat, and of the dependent territory, he turned nis thoughts towards finding some other more inaccessible hill as a place for his abode. After diligent search he fixed upon the hill of Rahiri, *a very high and strong place.* The ascent of this place was three *kos*, and it was situated 24 *kos* from the sea; but an inlet of the sea was about seven *kos* from the foot of the hill. The road to Surat passed near the place and that port was ten or twelve stages distant by land. Raigarh was four or five stages off. The hills were very lofty and difficult of ascent. Rain falls there for about five months in the year. The place was a dependency of the Konkan belonging to Nizam-ul-Mulk. Having fixed on the spot, he set about building his fort. When the gates and bastions and walls were complete and secure, he removed thither from Raigarh and made it his regular residence. After the guns were mounted and the place made safe, he closed all the roads around, leaving one leading to his fortress. One day he called an assembly and having placed a bag of gold and a gold bracelet worth a hundred *pagodas* before the people, he ordered proclamation to be made that this would be given to any one who would ascend the fort and plant a flag, by any other than the appointed road, without the aid of ladder or rope. A *Dher* came forward and said that with the permission of the Raja, he would mount the top of the hill, plant the flag and return. He ascended the hill, fixed the flag,

quickly came down again, and made his obeisance. Shivaji ordered that the purse of money and the gold bracelet should be given to him, and that he should be set at liberty; and he gave direction for closing the way by which the *Dher* had ascended.

Douglas calls it the Gibraltar of the East, and of all hill-forts of the Bombay Presidency the most interesting. Grose found it 'the most completely impregnable place in the universe'! Shivaji 'like the Eagle of the hills,' says another, 'with his penetrating eyes could from this eyrie descry his prey in all directions, but no one could approach the Lion's Den.'

On this hill-citadel Shivaji got himself crowned on Friday 5 June 1674 (*Jyestha suddha* 12 of the *Saka* year 1596 *Ananda*) He thereby appeased the conscience of the formalists, soothed the sentiments of the superstitious and made a striking impression on the minds of the masses. It was an act of supreme sagacity and far-seeing statesmanship. It drew around Shivaji–now *Chhatrapati*–all the varied and scattered elements of the Maratha State and provided a focus for their loyalties. Shivaji had reached the apogee of his greatness and grandeur, and all the gold he had garnered was lavishly expended in the gorgeous ceremonial. 'Fifty thousand Brahmans learned in the *Vedas*,' writes Sabhasad, 'had assembled. Besides them had gathered many *Taponidhis* and holy men, *Sanyasis*, guests, *Manbhavs*, *Jathadharis*, *Jogis*, and *Jangams* of various denominations. For four months they were given unhusked corn and sweets; when dismissed, money, ornaments and clothes in abundance were presented to every one according to merit. To Gaga Bhat, the chief priest, was given immense wealth. The total expenditure amounted to one *kror* and forty-two *lakhs* of *hons*. To every one of the eight *Pradhans* was given a reward of one *lakh* of *hons* and a gift of one elephant, one horse, and robes besides that. In this manner was the Raje installed on the throne. In this age of *Mlechha* Badshah's rule all over the world, *only this Maratha Badshah became Chhatrapati*. This affair that came to pass was one of no little importance.' Sabhasad also observes that Gaga Bhat opined that as Shivaji had subdued four Badshahis and possessed 75,000 cavalry, infantry, forts and strong-

holds but no throne, the Maratha Raja should also be crowned *Chhatrapati.*'

Among the visitors to *Raigad* at the time of the *Rajyabhisheka* or coronation ceremonials were the representatives of the English East India Company,—Henry Oxenden, Geo: Robinson and Tho: Michell. They reached 'Rairy' when the Raja was away at Pratapgad to worship at 'the shrine of Bowany, a pagod of great esteeme with him,' and were received by the 'Procurator Neragy Pundit.... whose reception was very kind.' They discussed many matters and were assured 'that *the Rajah would after his coronation act more like a prince by takeing care of his subjects and endeavouring the advancements of commerce and trade in his Dominions which he could not attend before being in perpetuall warrs with the King of Vizapore and the Great Mogull.*'

On 22 May 1674, 'We received order to assend up the hill into the Castle; the Rajah having enordered us a house there which we did, leaving Puncharra about 3 of the clock in the afternoon, we arrived at the top of that strong mountain about sunset, which is fortified by nature more than art being of very different access and but one avenue to it, which is guarded by two narrow gates and fortified with a strong high wall and bastions thereto, all the other part of the mountaine is a direct precippice so that its impregnable except the Treachery of some in it betrayes it. On the Mountaine are many strong buildings of the Rajah court and houses for others, Ministers of State, to the number of about 300, it is in lengths about 2 1/2 miles and in breadth about 1/2 mile, but no pleasant trees nor any sort of graine grows there on; our house was about a mile from the Rajah's pallace into which we retired with no little content.'

The next day they were granted audience hy Shivaji 'though busily employed with many other weighty affaires as his coronation, marriage, etc.' '*The Rajah assured us that we might now trade securely in all his Dominions without the least apprehension of evill from him*, for that the Peace was concluded.' On the 29th the Rajah was 'according to the Hindoo Custome, weighed in Gold and poised about 1600 Pagodas, which money together with one hundred thousand more, is to be distributed after his coronation into the Bramings who in

great numbers are flockt hither from all the adjacent countreys.'

'After the coronation, the Englishmen saw Shivaji on the 6th, about 7 or 8 of the clock, and the Rajah was seated on a magnificent throne, and all his nobles waiting on him in very rich attire. He presently enordered our coming nearer even to the Throne where being rested we were desired to retire which we did not so soon but that I tooke notice on each side of the throne there hung according to the (Mores manner) on heads of guilded Lances many emblimes of Government and Dominion, as on the right hand were two great fishes heads of Gould with every large teeth, on the left hand several horses tailes, a paire of Gould Scales on a very rich Lances head equally poysed an emblem of Justice, and as we returned at the Pallace gate there was standing two small ellephants on each side and two faire horses with Gould bridles and furniture, which made us admire which way they brought them up the hill, the passage being so difficult and hazardous.'

Dr. Fryer, another Englishman who was then at Bombay, narrates an interesting anecdote illustrative of Shivaji's hospitality towards his European guests. It is typical of his toleration, especially as the occasion was that of a sacred ritual when a vast concourse of orthodox Brahmans had gathered together at Raigad. 'I will only add one Passage,' writes Fryer, 'during the stay of our Ambassador at Rairee: The Diet of this sort of People admits not of great Variety of Cost, their delightfullest Food being only Cutchery, a sort of Pulse and Rice mixed together, and boiled in Butter, with which they grow fat. But such Victuals could not be long pleasing our Merchants who had been used to feed on good Flesh: It was therefore signified to the Rajah that Meat should be provided for them; and to that end a Butcher that served those *few Moors that were there*, that were able to go to the charge of Meat, was ordered to supply them with what Goat they should expend (nothing else here being to be gotten for them) which he did accordingly with the consumption of half a goat a Day, which he found very profitable for him, and thereupon was taken with a curiosity to visit his new customers; to whom, when he came, it was told them. The honest Butcher had made an Adventure up the Hill, though very

old, to have the sight of his good Masters who had taken off of his hands more flesh in that time they had been there, than he had sold in some years before ; so rare a thing it is to eat Flesh among them ; for the Gentiles eat none, and the Moors and Portugals eat it well stew'd, bak'd or made into Pottage; no Nation eating it roasted so commonly as we do ; And in this point I doubt we err in these Hot countries, where our spirits being always upon the Flight, are not so intent on the business of concoction ; so that those things that are easiest digested and that create the least trouble to the Stomach, we find by Experience to agree best here.'

The Dutch account of the coronation refers to Shivaji's abandonment of ' his present caste of Bhonsla ' and taking ' the caste of Kettery ' (*Kshatriya*). 'Taking into consideration that *Suasy could not be crowned unless he first became a Kettery*, and that he had promised not to act or rule tyrannically and badly as before, on 8th of June last, *they granted him the caste of Kettery* ..... but *he also demanded to be taught the Brahman rule.* This, however, they refused, but *one of the chief of them complied.*'

This is rare testimony from an unexpected quarter, to the most heated controversy that must have raged among orthodox circles as to matters of rectitude and propriety. Though the Bhosles claimed descent from the Sisodia Rajputs of Mewar, Shivaji's eligibility to the ritual to which the twice-born (*dvijas*) alone were entitled, had to be established to the satisfaction of Benares *Pundits*. The hall-mark of that status was undoubtedly the performance of the *Upanayana* ceremony which Shivaji had obviously not undergone. Even the marriages in the Bhosle family had been performed in accordance with the *Pauranic* and not the *Vedic* ritual. Shivaji aspired to be not merely the secular head of the State, but *Raja* and *Chhatrapati* in the Hindu tradition : to be supreme leader of the orthodox communities and sovereign protector of *Dharma*. For this, any status less than that of a *Kshatriya* would be inadequate. Hence the Dutch allusion to his admission into the ' Kettery caste'. Whether by reference to authentic horoscopes or genealogies, it is significant to note that the Dutch also refer to compliance by one of the chief of the Brahmans (evidently Gaga Bhat).

It speaks volumes for Shivaji's statemanship to have conceived of all the implications of an *Abhishikta Raja* and the significance of the unique title of *Chhatrapati.* No Hindu or Indian Prince, or for that matter, any ruler whatsoever had borne the significant name of *Chhatrapati* symbolising the '*protective umbrella*' instead of the truculent bird of prey, the Eagle of the Cæsars (or Kaisers), or the lion or 'king of beasts', or the Dragon of the Celestial Emperors, or even the *suvarna Garuda-dhwaja* of the ancient Yadava rulers of Maharashtra. Once this noble ideal was conceived of, outward conformity to orthodox prescriptions, investiture of the sacred-thread, ritualistic re-marriage with his own wedded wife, accession to the throne, and even repetition of the *Rajyabhisheka* according to *Tantric* rites, after the Vedic ceremonials had been once duly performed,—were all of secondary value. Shivaji having secured the substance, went through the magic shadow-show of ceremonials according to this cult and the other creed with a rare sense of humour.

A very good illustration of the manner in which the *Chhatrapati* discharged his trust as leader and Protector of Hindu *Dharma* and civilization is to be found in an interesting document which, if it is authentic, might be considered as the *Magna Carta* of Maratha *Svarajya.* It is dated 28 January 1677, and recounts the circumstances of Shivaji's coronation in accordance with ascertained sacred laws for the protection of all Hindu religious and social traditions. It promises to render the most speedy and impartial justice to all who should invoke Shivaji's dispensation following established traditions, scriptures and public opinion; and calls upon people of all communities to act with one accord and cooperate with the Government in defeating the *yavans* coming from the North. This done, it concludes, the rulers and subjects will be alike blessed by God. It reveals the spirit of Shivaji's administration. It shows that he was not a mere empire-builder adding territory to territory. It proves that Shivaji was a man with a mission who drew his inspirations from history, from the classics, from the society and culture around him, from Ramdas and the saints of Maharashtra, and more, and constantly, from his mother Jijabai as an embodiment of all these. She had

nursed his body and spirit, and lived just long enough to witness his coronation. Then she said her *nunc dimittis.*

'Suasy's mother,' declares a Dutch letter, 'having come to be present at her son's coronation, although about 80 years old, died 12 days after, leaving to her son about 25 *lakhs* of *pagodas,—some say more.*' What "more," indeed, the poor, calculating, foreign traders could hardly assess: It was the spirit revealed in Shivaji's *Dharma Rajya*! Jija Bai seemed to declare:

'Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord,
According to thy word, in peace;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;
A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of thy people!'

CHAPTER IX

THE PATRIMONY

प्रतिपच्चंद्रलेखेव वर्धिष्णुर्विश्ववंदिता।
शाहसूनोः शिवस्यैषा मुद्रा भद्राय राजते॥

ROYAL SEAL OF SHIVAJI

'DYNAMIC like the new-born moon, adored by the universe, this Seal of Shiva (son of Shahji) is the beacon of stable prosperity.' The choice of this inscription for his Royal Seal by Shivaji is no less significant than his assumption of the title *Chhatrapati*. 'Vikramaditya' was quite in the Hindu tradition; but *Chhatrapati* was more characteristic of Shivaji's idealism. He was not out for martial glory or imperial aggrandisement, but only anxious to protect Hindu *Dharma* and Society. 'Love of country is patriotism; love of more country is imperialism.' Shivaji's patriotism was not geographical but ethical: his imperialism was protective, not acquisitive or destructive. He was not a *Maratha nationalist*, if by this is implied anything parasitical. His cause was the cause of Hindu civilization and not merely the freedom of Maharashtra. Those who have concentrated on his acts of war and temporary objectives have missed the meaning of his *Mission*. The true heart of Shivaji *the man* is revealed more by his submission to Ramdas and Tukaram, and the adoration of his mother, than by his slaying of Afzal Khan or the sack of Surat. जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसि। 'Mother and the Motherland are more adorable than Heaven.' Shivaji loved the culture of his land (*Hindu-rashtra*) as much as his mother. His mission was to fight for 'the ashes of his ancestors and the temples of his gods'.

Though destiny had separated Shivaji from his father, their hearts were throbbing in unison. This was amply demonstrated by their community of action. Shivaji exerted himself not merely for the release of his father from imprisonment, but also for the permanent release of his patrimony from the harassing domination of the *Mlenchhas*. Shahji, as

we noticed, had grown under other circumstances, and his lot had been cast under masters whom his eldest surviving son heartily hated. Particularly had his mind undergone a metamorphosis since his malicious arrest and imprisonment. His release was more due to his own worth than to the capricious magnanimity of his masters. Shahji had made himself indispensable to the Adilshahi; he was the prop of the Karnatak dominion. His message to Kanhoji Jedhe, Ali Adil Shah's mandate to the same captain, Shahji's reply to the Dowager Queen of Bijapur when she complained about Shivaji's activities, Shahji's second arrest and immediate release thereafter,—all bear testimony to our reading of the situation. Shahji as a pioneer was working, though perhaps less consciously and deliberately than Shivaji, yet as importantly, for the common cause of '*Hindavi Swaraj*'. To secure his patrimony in Karnatak, therefore, was as necessary for Shivaji as his independence in the homelands. As soon as he had firmly established himself as sovereign over Maharashtra, consequently, Shivaji turned his attention to Karnatak. For Karnatak was not a mere piece of territory but a heritage. It was more valuable to Shivaji, as the new champion of Hindu freedom and civilization, than was the connexion of the attenuated Holy Roman Empire of Austria for Napoleon Bonaparte. Maratha *Svarajya* was the continuation of Vijayanagar *Samrajya*.

In dealing with Shivaji's campaign in the Karnatak during 1677-78, which is the subject of the present chapter, it is necessary to be clear about its antecedents, as well as, its perspective. Its military details are only of secondary interest. In the first place, it is to be remembered that Shivaji was following in the wake of his father Shahji and his half-brother Vyankoji. Both Shahji and Vyankoji were officers in Adilshahi service. The former, when he died in 1664, had left behind him a large number of scattered *jagirs* and estates out of which Bangalore was initially the most important; because that was for the most part Shivaji's headquarters. Shahji's elder brother, Sambhaji, had died at Kanakgiri about nine years before his father. Shivaji himself had left Bangalore while he was still s boy of twelve years. Choosing an independent career for himself he had carved out a kingdom of which he was now

sovereign master. Vyankoji, his younger half-brother, had also built up for himself a principality at Tanjore (1675), but as a dependency of Bijapur. Shivaji needed no augmenting of either his resources or prestige by wanting a share in his patrimony; and Tanjore evidently had been no part of it. But he certainly did want in the South a foothold by which he could overthrow for ever the power of the Muslims. Had Vyankoji been like-minded, his task might have been easier. But unfortunately it was otherwise. Already, as a loyal officer under Bijapur, he had fought against Shivaji during the latter's abortive alliance with the Mughals. Obviously, for Shivaji the most natural thing to do, under the circumstances, was to ask for a share in Shahji's property which Vyankoji had been enjoying undivided since 1664. He had no designs against his brother, but only wanted a political lever in the Karnatak. Since this could not be had for the asking, conflict was inevitable. The logic of the situation demanded action.

The first thing Shivaji attempted was negotiation. 'For 13 years you have enjoyed the undivided patrimony,' he wrote to Vyankoji. 'I waited in patience. Then ..... in many ways I demanded my share. But you would not even entertain the thought of yielding it. Then it became necessary to take harsh measures. *It was not befitting my position and reputation to seize your person ..... It is not good to promote internal discord; by so doing, of old, the Pandavas and Kauravas came to grief.* I again told you through Samji Naik, Konheri Pant and Sivaji Shankar: Let us make a division and take our respective shares and live with good-will towards each other. But you, like Duryodhana, intended evil and determined not to come to any agreement, but to fight.'

This letter was actually written when the hostilities had started and Shivaji's forces had made considerable gains. But its recapitulation of the peaceful negotiations is authentic and reveals the mind of Shivaji not less than that of his brother. 'Now, some places I have already taken,' it continues; 'others which are still in your hands, viz. Arni, Bangalore, Kolar, Hoskote, and other minor places, and Tanjore should be handed over to our men; and of the cash, jewellery, elephants and horses, half should be given to me as my share. You will be wise to make such accommodation with me. If

you do so with a clear mind, I shall give you a *jagir* of 3 *lakhs* of *hons* in the district of Panhala, this side of the Tungabhadra, to be held under me. Or, if you do not like to hold a *jagir* under me, I shall procure for you a *jagir* of 3 *lakhs* from Qutb Shah. Both alternatives I have suggested to you. One of them you should consider and accept. Do not leave it to be decided by obstinacy. *There is no reason why we should quarrel between ourselves and come to grief.*'

The attitude of Vyankoji reflected in the above letter is also confirmed by foreign contemporary accounts. Martin, for example, observes: Sivagy had some claim against Ecugy (Ekoji, i.e. Vyankoji), his brother by his father, with respect to his succession to the deceased. Ecugy had in his possession one third of the land of Gingy which their common parent Sagimagro (Shahji Maharaj) held on his part. There were also his personal property and valuable effects. Sivagy demanded his share of these goods. He had written several times to Ecugy to come and meet him, and that they would settle the matter between them; the latter recoiled at last after having taken, according to his idea, all possible securities from his brother, by some oaths customary among them, but which were not inviolable to those who cared more for their interest than their religion, Ecugy crossed the river Coleroon and came to see Sivagy. The first conversations gave evidence of amity and tenderness only; then it came to the negotiation, when Ecugy discovered that his brother would not let him go unless he had satisfied him about his claims. He also used his cunning, and while he offered friendly words he sought some means of withdrawing himself from such a bad strait. He succeeded therein one night. He had a *cattamaron* kept ready for him on the banks of the Coleroon under pretext of necessity, for he was watched. He approached the banks of the river, threw himself into the *cattamaron* and crossed to the other side which was his country and where he had some troops. On receipt of the information given to Sivagy, he caused Ecugy's men who were in his camp to be arrested; among them was one Jagarnatpendit, a Bramen who commanded the troops of his brother, a man of courage and ability. The brothers did not meet again since; however, Sivagy took possession of a part of the lands of Gingy which

belonged to Ecugy, but it would have cost him more if he had remained in the camp.'

In the two accounts cited above, which substantially corroborate each other, we have a clear picture of the situation *vis-a-vis* the two brothers. To understand how the meeting of Shivaji and Vyankoji on the Coleroon (July 1677) came about, we must follow the earlier movements of Shivaji.

Having convinced himself of the necessity of the Karnatak campaign, Shivaji set about it in a manner which will illustrate his strategy and statesmanship. He no longer moved like an adventurer as before. He carefully surveyed the situation both in the Deccan and in the Karnatak, matured his plans, chose his own time for action, and proceeded with it right royally.

The Muslim powers of the Deccan were disunited and weak. The Mughals had designs against both, which Aurangzeb realised by the end of that decade (1677-87). The Adilshahi and the Qutbshahi were extinguished respectively in 1686 and 1687. They were on their last legs when Shivaji was planning his Karnatak campaign. Once they had acted together in the business of subjugating the south. Then Bijapur was the senior partner; but now she had fallen on evil days. The Afghan and Abyssinian parties paralysed the kingdom by their quarrels. The leader of the former group, Bahlol Khan, seized all authority in the name of the boy-prince Sikandar (11 Nov. 1675) and murdered the old Regent, Khawas Khan (18 January 1676). Khhizr Khan, the right hand man of Bahlol, met with a similar fate, soon after; and the Mughals taking advantage of this civil strife, opened a campaign against that helpless kingdom (31 May 1676).

It was on such a broken reed that Vyankoji was foolishly relying when Shivaji demanded his share of their patrimony. Instead of directly dealing with the situation and settling the matter in his own judgment, the pusilanimous Vyankoji referred it to his suzerain master, the king of Bijapur. 'I call myself a Badshahi officer,' he plaintively wrote, 'and enjoy this property in accordance with the Badshahi orders. My elder brother demands a share of the patrimony, and I have answered that the property is in lieu of service. Why should I give him any share?' The reply of the Badshah is illumi-

nating. 'We have learnt the purport of your letter. Shahji Raje served us faithfully, and the *sanad* was granted *to him and his descendants*. Shivaji now demands his share. Although a traitor, he is a Government servant, and we are quite able to demand explanation of him. *Why do you create family squbbles and bring trouble to the Government?* If we write that you should not give him his share he will create disturbances in our territories, and that is not good. His father was our servant and he will enjoy the ancestral property and serve us. Although an enemy, *if he demands his rights as a servant in a friendly manner, you should certainly surrender them. He is the senior owner of your patrimony.*' Despite these accents of justice one cannot miss the more than lurking sense of embarrassment. Shivaji too was well aware of this. The astute Raghunath Narayan Hanmante, who had acute differences with Vyankoji on matters of State and had but recently left Tanjore, had passed through Bijapur and joined Shivaji. The result was a master-stroke of diplomacy. Shivaji bribed the Mughal viceroy, Bahadur Khan into inaction, through 'the highly intelligent' Niraji Raoji, and made alliance with Qutb Shah. The reason is naively stated by Sabhasad thus :

'The Raje entertained in his heart the desire of conquering the Karnatak from the Tungabhadra valley to the Kaveri. It would cause delay if only the army was sent for the conquest. So the Raje decided to go in person..... For accompanying him to Karnatak, the Raje selected from the Royal cavalry (*paga*) regiments 25,000 horsemen, and he took with him the *Sarkarkun* Raghunath Narayan and Janardhan Narayan (Hanmante) who had local knowledge of Karnatak.... *The Raje thought that the cash accumulated in the treasury should not be spent for that campaign. The money should be procured from new sources and the conquest should be effected through such means. Seeing that there was abundance of wealth in the Badshahi of Bhaganagar, he decided to exploit it through friendly means.*'

Through Pralhad Niraji he negotiated with Madanna and Akanna—'the virtual sovereigns and real masters of the whole Badshahi.' The outcome was the happy concurrence of the Qutb Shah in the projected campaign. But, as during the earlier Bijapur-Golkonda campaign, so too on the present occasion, Qutb Shah was only a junior partner.

Shivaji started from Rajgad in January 1677 for Hyderabad. His troops numbered about 50,000. They were unusually well appointed for the occasion, and were under very strict orders to behave themselves exceedingly well in the Qutb-shahi dominions. Shivaji himself acted with the best diplomatic *finesse* and condescension. So the Marathas were received by the Qutb Shah with the utmost cordiality. The exemplary conduct of the guests during their entire sojourn indicated their rigorous discipline under Shivaji. The rough Mavale soldiers, who were ferocious on the battlefields, gave a surprisingly good account of themselves under the civil restraints imposed upon them by their sovereign leader on this occasion. There was a unique display of grandeur on both sides; but the personal equation between Shivaji and Abdul Hasan seemed to be somewhat like that between Nadir Shah and Muhammad Shah at Delhi in 1739. The host in each case heaved a sigh of relief as the fearful guest quitted his dominions, after having dictated terms which the host could ill-afford to refuse. It was all through *vidi, veni vici* for the Maratha Cæsar.

The terms of the 'secret treaty' have been thus summarised by Sarkar : ' The Sultan was to pay Shivaji a subsidy of 3,000 *hun* a day, or four and a half *lakhs* of Rupees a month, and send 5,000 men (consisting of 1,000 horse and 4,000 foot) in charge of one of his generals (*sar-i-lashkar*), Mirza Muhammad Amin, to co-operate in the conquest of the Karnatak. A train of artillery with material was also supplied by Qutb Shah, and probably a large sum of money as advance payment of the promised subsidy. In return for this aid, Shivaji promised his ally such parts of his conquests in the Karnatak as had not belonged to his father Shahji. The defensive alliance against the Mughals was strengthened anew with solemn oaths taken by Shivaji in the presence of Qutb Shah, while the latter promised to pay his annual tribute of one *lakh* of *hun* regularly and to keep a Maratha ambassador at his court. '

Shivaji tried further to strengthen himself by calling upon important Adilshahi *sardars* liks Maloji Ghorpade to join him, forgetting old family scores, in the name of Maratha, or rather Deccani, freedom from the domination of the foreign

Pathans. In a letter of unique historical interest he points out that the Adil Shah has fallen on bad days and the young Padshah has become a mere puppet in the hands of Bahlol Khan and his Pathan partisans. They will destroy the families of the Deccani nobles one after another, he warns ; they will not allow any one to live. 'Considering this, we from the beginning had maintained good relations with the Qutb Shah. The Qutb Shah has agreed to the terms proposed by me and Madanna Pant. Whatever I proposed, he agreed too. Such duties and responsibilities were entrusted to us that our Padshahi should be made to flourish in the highest degree. *The Pathans should be destroyed and steps should be taken to keep the Padshahi of the Deccan in the hands of the Deccanis.*

'After an agreement was reached on both sides, we also thought that *all true Marathas* should be taken into the *confederacy* and introduced to the Qutb Shah. Considering the good of the Marathas, I have driven out of my mind all the enmity of our elders. You should be free from suspicion. Bearing in mind the good of the Marathas, who are people of importance, and speaking in several ways to the Qutb Shah, we have requested the King to send you a *firman.*' Finally, Shivaji appeals to the sentiments of the Ghorpades, asks Maloji to disabuse himself of all false considerations of loyalty to the Adilshahi of 'two generations,' and points to the usurpation of power by the Pathans at Bijapur at all costs. 'You Marathas,' he says, 'are our kith and kin ; and we should all join together and destroy the Pathans at all costs.' In return, *jagirs* worth double their Adilshahi estates are offered in the dominions of the Qutb Shah.

Before we proceed further with the narrative of Shivaji's movements in the Karnatak, it will be helpful to survey the conditions obtaining there at the time of this campaign. The hold of the Adilshahi government in these regions was only nominal. Such of the officers and commandants of forts as still held their appointments from Bijapur, with the singular exception of Vyankoji Bhosle, were noted for neither their efficiency nor allegiance to superior authority. In fact, there was none at Bijapur at that time to command unified loyalty. Hence the administration in the south was completely dis-

organized. Conditions since the death of Shahji (1664) had become worse instead of better. The land had been continuously ravaged by the armies of Bijapur, the Nayaks, and robbers, so much so that foreign observers (in 1676) remarked : 'This long series of wars has been followed by a general famine which ravages especially in the environs of Madura and Marava. Everywhere only devastation and solitude and death are seen ; a part of the inhabitants have succumbed to starvation ; others have left their country to seek relief elsewhere. Day by day, Ekoji, on the one hand, and the King of Mysore, on the other, will absorb the last *debris* of this kingdom once so flourishing. *The conquest of it will be very easy, for the people will regard the enemy, whoever he may be, as their true saviour.*'

Another account, dated 16 November 1676, describing Negapatam states: 'There was much consternation and the countries were continually being looted on account of differences and intestine wars betweeh the Madurese, Tansiouwer, Theuver and Visiapore rulers.....In the meantime, the prospects of trade and agriculture were absolutely reined by all these troubles, and for many years these countries would not be flourishing again, especially because now the Visapore commander-in-chief Mamoedachan and Cherechan Lody of Sinsier had slso started a war against each other.'

It was into such a distracted and devastated land that Shivaji and his Maratha troops burst about May 1677. The Golkonda army, comprising no more than 5,000 horse and foot, could have counted for no more than camp followers with the vastly superior forces of Shivaji. Hence, the alliance was merely nominal from the very beginning; but with it Shivaji could appear to be acting not only in his own interest. Yet, as the campaign advanced, it was more than apparent that the Maratha would appropriate all.

Leaving Golkonda in March, they were near Madras in the first week of May. The historic fortress of Ginji was taken by the middle of the month. Vellore was reached about the 23rd. It was held by Abdullah Khan Habshi. Being well fortified and provisioned Vellore took over fourteen months to capture (23 May 1677 to 21 August 1678). But Shivaji marched on, leaving the siege operations to Narahari

Rudra *Sabnis*, with 2,000 horse and 5,000 Mavale infantry. A great battle was fought at Tiruvadi on 26 June and the Bijapur army under Sher Khan Lodi was put to flight. The Khan was pursued, discovered lurking in a forest, and finally forced to surrender on 5 July. From 6 July to 2 August 1677 Shivaji was encamped at Tirumalvadi on the Coleroon negotiating with his brother Vyankoji. But his peaceful efforts had no better result than those of Humayun with Kamran. Consequently Shivaji was obliged to fight.

Martin's account of the meeting between the two brothers has already been cited. An entry in the Dutch Dagh-Register, dated 2 Oct. 1677, states : 'Siwagie is now with his army in the country of Mysore, not far from the capitals of the princes of Madure and Tansjour, from which places he threatens the whole of Visiapour. People are of opinion that he will now make himself Master (of the country), for the Golconda authorities on the whole will not do other than what he wants but try to satisfy him only with pretty words. He had already a quarrel with his brother Egosia Rajia (the present ruler of the Province of Tansjour) over the estates left by their father Sahasy, so that he took possession of those lands for himself.'

The conduct of Vyankoji since he broke off the negotiations of Śhivaji is reflected in several letters of the time. While Shivaji's forces were engaged in the sieges of Arni and Vellore, states an English report, 'Eccogee is leagueing with the Naigues of Madure and Maysore and other woodmen, and likely to find Sevagee work enough.' Likewise, Andre Friere the Jesuit missionary at Madura also writes: 'Ekoji profiting by this diversion to re-establish his affairs gathers his soldiers crosses the river, and enters the territory of Gingi. Santoji comes to give him battle at head of an army superior in number and commanded by clever and intrepid captains.... But Ekoji's men with great fury fell on the enemy like lions, broke their ranks, and spread carnage everywhere and turned the victory to their side. But all on a sudden, art and stratagem snatched away the victory from blind courage....After a bloody combat of several hours, they are broken and they leave the battle-field and the honour of victory to Santogi, whose losses are, nevertheless, much more considerable than those of the conquered.'

We have confirmation of this information in Martin's account: 'A great battle was fought,' he writes, 'on the 26th of this month (November, 1677) between the armies of Sivagy and Ecugy. *It was the latter who commenced it. The melee* was severe for the people of these parts: many were killed and wounded; among those were some men of importance. The two parties retreated and the loss was almost equal.' Further details of this Pyrrhic victory are contained in a Madras report dated 29 Nov. 1677. It states that 'Sevagees Lieutenant and brother Santogee left in Chengy and neighbouring conquest was few days since engaged by the forces of their brother Eccogee from Tangiour, being 4,000 horse and 10,000 ffoot, his being 6,000 horse and 6,000 ffoot. The battle held from morning till night, in which Santogee was worsted and fled 3 quarters of one of those leagues, being pursued ¾ of a league. When being returned to their severall camps, Santogee, consulting with his captains what the importance and shame would be, resolved to dress and saddle their horses again, and so immediately rode away by other wayes, and in the dead of the night surprised them fast at rest after soe hard labour; their horses unsaddled, and made a great slaughter of them, taking nigh 1000 horse in that manner, the 3 chiefe commanders, the tents and all their baggage, and 100 horse more taken by woodmen which fell to share the plunder; and the rest fled over the river Coalladon (Coleroon) for Tangiour; by which meanes Sevagee seemes to have gained a quiett possession for the present; Maduray Naygue refusing to meddle on either part.' That the conduct of the Madura Nayak was more pusillanimous than neutral is indicated by a Jesuit commentary: 'While the two armies were fighting, the Nayak of Madura came with his troops against Ekoji.... (but) he did not know how to take advantage of it....he wasted his time there.... (and finally) the cowardly and imprudent Nayak lost his time and money and went to the citadel to Trichinopoly to hide himself in disgrace.' The Nayak was not a friend of Shivaji, but he was certainly an enemy of Ekoji. This is clear from the Jesuit records. 'As I have told you in my last letter,' says one, 'the Nayak of Madura was preparing for a war with Ekoji, the old captain of Idal Khan, now an independent master of

Tanjore and a part of Gingi. Meanwhile it was reported that Sabaji (Shivaji), the elder brother of Ekoji, in revolt against his sovereign for some time, had seized several provinces of Bisnagar (Vijayanagar) and advanced at the head of a strong army. This news appeared incredible; how to believe that Sabaji could traverse a distance of several hundreds of leagues through (the country of) the warlike people of the Dekhan and Golconda to carry war into our country? While the probability of this rumour was argued about, Sabaji solved the question by falling like a thunderbolt on the citadel of Ginge, which he took at the first assault. He owed this easy success to the division which prevailed, and to the numerous communications which he had carefully conducted with the Muhammadans.'

In July 1677 an envoy from Madura had waited upon Shivaji: 'Here came an Higyb from the Nague of Madure; to whom His Highness Sevagee Raja spoke that his master bore a signe of being worth 900 lacks, whereof he should give him for the present 100 lacks for his expenses, to which the said Higyb answered that part of his masters country the Nague of Misur had taken, and part Yekagee, wherefore he was not able to give anything at present, and that if he would restore him back the said country, he will give seven lacks. These are the news at present here. The Nague of Madure has sent all his family away to Madure from Chertanapelle (Trichanapallee) where they were before, and while the river of Colorun remaines full they feare nothing; but afterwards God knows what will be done.'

Though no Maratha army of Shivaji invaded Madura, that unfortunate country could hardly escape the horrors of devastation by other agencies. From a Jesuit letter (1678) we learn: 'To make matters worse, the whole country has been devastated by a kind of deluge: in the provinces of Satyamangalam, Trichinopoly, Tanjore and Gingi, the inundations have carried away whole villages with their inhabitants. This scourge of divine anger was soon followed by famine, pestilence, and at last brigandage which infests all the kingdom. The capital, once so flourishing, is no longer recognizable; its palaces, once so rich and majestic, are deserted and begin

to fall into ruins; Madura resembles a town much less than a den of robbers.'

To return to Ekoji, an English record, dated 9 April 1678, notes: 'By intelligence from the parts of Chengee we understand that by Sevagees order to his Generall, his Brother Santogee, and to his Braminies and Chief Officers, *they have concluded a firme peace with Eccogee, his Brother, and delivered back to Eccogee a good part of the country worth* 2 *lack of Pardoes per Annum*; which Sevagee had taken from him and Eccogee in lieu thereof had paid 3 lacks of Pardoes in ready money, and upon the confirmation of this agreement, Santogee had been feasted and nobly presented by Eccogee in his castle at Tanjoor, and after having received the third quarter of 6 Lack of Pardoes, which the Madura Naigue promised to pay Sevagee, of which there now remains but 1½ Lack behind to be paid. Santogee with his Army returned to Chengee Castle, *great part of which is very strongly rebuilt since Sevagee took it*, and there is great store of Graine and all things necessary for a long siege allready laid in, and he has a good stock of many allsoe beforehand besides the Rent of the country he has taken, dayly coming.'

It is interesting to find corroboration of this from the Dutch sources: 'The two last letters dated Nagapatam the 11th and 15th May,' states the Dagh Register, 'mention that the wandering robber Sewagie has at last made an alliance with his brother Egosie Ragia and the Madurese. *The said Egosie Ragia would keep in his possession the rich country of Tansjour* and Sewagie would have to abandon it for three lacs of pardaux and he would then go to Veloure, for which he had already left with the whole of his army.' Finally, '*The Ruler Egosie Ragia is now-a-days in peaceful possession of the countries of Tansjour, more by the prestige of his brother Sewagie Ragia than by his own strength...* . This was the reason why the Neyek of Madura did not draw sword against him.'

Vyankoji was brave and, as his battle with Santoji showed, possessed great martial qualities. He had stepped into the shoes of Shahji as the leading Bijapuri general in the Karnatak and made a mark by his conquest of Tanjore in 1675. Not only could he act with vigour, as occasion demanded,

but also rule the conquered lands wisely and efficiently. As ruler of Tanjore 'he sought to make himself beloved by the inhabitants. The justice and wisdom of his government began to close the wounds of the preceding reign', writes a Jesuit observer, 'and to develop the natural resources of the country. By repairing the canals and tanks, he has given fertility to the vast fields which had been left unutilized for many years, and the last crop has surpassed all that was seen before.' This is valuable testimony coming as it does from a foreigner and contemporary. What he lacked was the vision of Shivaji. He could not even appreciate the mission of his great brother. But the magnanimity and statesmanship of the *Chhatrapati* showed themselves, as ever before, in the hour of triumph. This is revealed by his treatment of Vyankoji in all stages of their conflict, as well as by the terms of the treaty between them. According to Sabhasad, Shivaji declared, 'Vyankoji Raje is my youger brother. He has acted like a child. But still he is my brother; protect him. Do not ruin his kingdom.' So he commanded his generals. The terms of his treaty with Vyankoji are thus stated in the *Shiva Digvijaya Bakhar*:—

1. The wicked, the thieves, drunkards, and haters of Hindus, etc., should not be allowed to stay within the kingdom. In case they are suffered to remain, they should be compelled to give security, and a strict watch must be kept over them that they might do no harm.

2. The *Mahal* of fort Arni, conferred on Yado Bhaskar by the late Maharaja (Shahji), should not be disturbed. He has eight sons who might render proper service.

3. We have a *sanad* for *jagirs* from Bijapur. Some of our estates were brought under their jurisdiction by treaty when we came from Daulatabad. Many *paligars* were also brought under our jurisdiction. There might be some excess or deficiency of revenues in our joint-holdings. We have to serve the Bijapur Government with a contingent of 5,000 horse. *But in the treaty concluded between us it has been settled that we shall not be called upon to serve in person, but only render military assistance whenever necessary.* This was settled when our father was still alive. *Hence, you shall not have to serve the Bijapur government personally.* In case of your

failure, I shall exact from you the money required for military assistance.

4. The *Patilki*, *Deshamukhi* and *Nadgauda watans* in the Deccan, viz., Hingane Beradi and Deulgaum, are our ancestral property. You will have nothing to do with them. I shall continue to manage them.

5. If people from my provinces go to yours, and your people come into mine, they should be amicably induced to return to their original provinces.

6. The *pargana* of Bengrul yields today–with the neighbouring stations of Baskot and Silekot–a revenue of two *lakhs Barai*. If they are brought under our administration, they might yield five *lakhs*. These I had conferred on *Chi. Saubhagyavati* Dipa Bai, for *Choli-bangadi*. These should be continued in the female line. The *mahals* should be managed by you, but their revenue should be enjoyed by her on whom it might be conferred by *Sau.* Dipa Bai.

7. A *Mahal* yielding seven *lakhs* of *hons* out of my conquests near Gingi, I have granted as hereditary *inam* to *Chi. Rajeshri* Vyankaji Raje for *dudha-bhat*. I shall send the *sanads* according to the list of *mahals* sent by you.

8. I have written to *Chi.* Bahirji Raje. He will deliver to you what *mahals* you want. He is a faithful ancestral servant. A hereditary *inam* of villages yielding one *lakh Barai* in the province of Tanjore is conferred on you. *Sanads* will be sent when you name the villages.

9. If thieves from your province come into mine, I shall deliver them to you on demand; and if traitors from my province go to yours, you should do the same.

10. You should continue the monthly allowance granted for the Maharaja's (Shahji's) *samadhi*, including the band, horses, elephants, and *karkuns* that should be maintained there. Do not allow any slackness in this respect.

11. The privileges, etc. of the relations of the Royal family and the titled nobility should be preserved, and their status and order of precedence should be respected. No heavy duties should be assigned to them.

12. The officers and commanders should be consulted on important matters. Only loyal and competent officers should be appointed to positions of trust. Promotions should be

given strictly according to merit. Conflicts among State officials must be discouraged by all possible means.

13. The private suite of Raja Vyankoji should consist of good, loyal and upright servants who should give sureties for their good behaviour. All should be treated equally; there should be no favourites.

14. Agents and Envoys should be maintained in all the neighbouring Courts, whether friendly or hostile. Arrangements should be made for secret and prompt intelligence about changes.

15. Both *paga* and *siledar* cavalry divisions should be properly organised. Horses and men should be always in readiness. *Shiledar* forces should be converted into *paga* as far as possible. Artillery and cavalry should both be ready in case of invasion.

16. Disputes among high and low concerning boundary rights, contracts, treaties, etc. should be discouraged. The poor and needy should be succoured in difficulties, and saved from the oppression of the rich and powerful.

17. Religious grants from the State, benefactions to temples and holy places, should be continued. On no account should they be violated.

18. Suits relating to debtors and creditors, partitions and successions, inheritances, etc. should be decided by specially constituted *Panchayats*. The administration of Civil Justice should be conducted in the best interests of the people, without corruption or bribery. The State should consider itself the special guardian of the poor in matters of justice.

19. *Protection once offered, mere might has never been resorted to in the history of our family. This tradition should be maintained in the future also.*

Obviously, this is not only a treatly–as treaties go–but also the *Political Testament* of Shivaji intended for the guidance of Vyankoji in his southern charge.

The defeat of Vyankoji (16 Nov. 1677) had been at the hands of Santoji Bhosle and Hambir Rao Mohite who were provoked into action by Vyankoji himself. Shivaji had been obliged to leave the Karnatak earlier in November 1677 to defend his kingdom from the Mughals in the north. The

siege of Vellore was at that time still dragging on; it was successfully terminated on 21 August 1678. Shivaji, nevertheless, took Bangalore, Kolar, Sera etc. in the Mysore plateau, during his march northward. Bankapur, Koppal, Gadag and Laxmeshwar in western Karnatak, were also likewise occupied more or less easily. Remarkable resistance was, however, offered by Malla Naikini at Bhilavdi and she could not be subdued until 28 February 1678. Shivaji left part of his forces behind to complete his unfinished tasks, and himself reached Panhala on 4 April. He was back in Raigad before June 1678,—18 months after he had left for Golkonda.

An English report, dated 16 January 1678, said: 'With a success as Cæsar's in Spain, he came, saw and overcame and reported so vast a treasure in gold, diamonds, emeralds, rubies and wrought coral, that have strengthened his arms with very able sinews to prosecute his further victorious designs.' Sabhasad estimates the territory annexed by Shivaji in the Karnatak as yielding an annual revenue of 20 *lakhs* of *hons*, and including a hundred forts, taken or built by Shivaji. Another English record states that 'Shivaji by his deputies has a full and quiet possession of all these countries about those two castles of Jinji and Vellore, which are worth 22 *lakhs* of *pardoes* (or 550 thousand pounds sterling) per annum in which he has a considerable force of men and horse, 72 strong hills and 14 forts (in the plain),—being 60 leagues long and 40 broad.'

In the light of the above, Sir Jadunath Sarkar does not appear to be correct in his estimation of Shivaji's Karnatak campaign. In the first edition of his *Shivaji and His Times* he held the view that, 'It is incredible that a born strategist like Shivaji could have really intended to annex permanently a territory on the Madras coast, which was separated from his own dominions by two powerful and potentially hostile States like Bijapur and Golconda, and more than 700 miles distant from his capital. *His aim was merely to squeeze the country of its accumulated wealth and return home with the booty.* The partition of his father's heritage was only a plea adopted to give a show of legality to this campaign of plunder.' Though *he has omitted this statement from the*

latest edition of his work, the latter part of the aim of Shivaji as understood by Sarkar, still finds elaborate argument. According to him, Shivaji wanted to replenish his treasury which was depleted by the extravagance of his coronation and military expenditure. All other avenues having been exhausted, he turned to Karnatak,—*'this real land of gold'*. It seems to us, however, that Sarkar's description of this *El Dorado* is both unreal and anachronistic. Karnatak might have been both historically and potentially rich : in the time of 'Samudra Gupta and the Western Chalukyas, Malik Kafur and Mir Jumla'. It might have had at the end of the 17th century 'still enough wealth left in it to tempt the cupidity of Aurangzib'. But what is strictly relevant to our context is whether Karnatak was a land flowing with milk and honey *at the moment* when Shivaji contemplated and actually carried out his invasion. The contemporary European descriptions tell a different story, as we have already witnessed. He himself states : "It is very doubtful whether Shivaji would, of himself, have cared to assert his right to his father's Karnatak territory. *He certainly did not need it.* As he rightly said on his death-bed, 'I received [from my father] the Puna territory worth only 40,000 *hun*, but I have won a kingdom yielding one *krore* of *hun*' (Sabhasad 104)." Further, he also observes : 'Over the Karnatak plains thus conquered, he at first placed Shantaji, a natural son of Shahji, as viceroy with Jinji for his headquarters, assisted by Raghunath Narayan Hanumante as diplomatic adviser and auditor (*majmudar*) and Hambir Rao as commander of the army of occupation. The tableland of Mysore was placed under Rango Narayan as viceroy, but subject to the higher jurisdiction of Jinji.' Lastly, he states that when the Maratha army under Hambir Rao was withdrawn, Raghunath Pant organised in Karnatak a 'local force' of 10,000 horse (both *paga* and *siledar*) 'for the defence of the new province'. In the face of these admissions we cannot accept Sarkar's categorical assertion: 'But *gold* and *not land*, was his (Shivaji's) *chief object*.'

Shivaji improved the fortifications of the country he conquered, appointed officers for its administration, left definite instructions as to the policies to be followed, and made every

effort to conciliate the people and foster their trade and industry. His dealings with the Dutch, the French and the English during this campaign are illustrative of his attitude. On 31st July 1677 the Chief of the Dutch factory at Tegenapatam (Guddalore) waited upon Shivaji, at Tundumgurti, with rich presents—silks, spices, Maldiv cocoanuts, sword blades, etc. Shivaji was pleased with the gifts and sent the Dutchman away with a robe of honour. On 2 October the same year the Dutch noted : '*in all these matters the said Sivasi conducted himself in a very polite and friendly manner toward the Company as also our residents in Golconda. Later he promised to our representative in Tegenapatam to promote the trade of our Company in all possible ways which is also shown by the grant of same couls.*'

In June 1677, according to the French Governor of Pondicherry (Francois Martin), their Brahman envoy had no less than three interviews with Shivaji : '*Sevagy assured our envoy that we might stay in complete security at Pondichery* without taking the side of either party ; that if we offered the least insult to his people there would be no quarter for us or for those of our people who were in the factory at Rajapour, that he would send an *avaldar* in a few days to govern Pondichery and that we might have to live with him in the same manner as we had done with the officers of Chircam.'

From the English records we obtain several interesting details : On 9 May 1677, for instance, they noted : 'Sevages (or be it his Soun) being entertained in the King of Golcondae service, and now upon his march to fall upon Chengy with an army of 20 Mille horse and 40 Mille foot, the van whereof (being about 5 Mille Horse) already past Tripatty and Calastry 9 and 8 leagues Gentu from hence, and this night expected at Cangiwaram (anchivaram) about 4 leagues Gentu hence, a distance which it is very usuall for his Horse to march in a nights time.' Shivaji repeatedly asks for supplies of 'Maldivo cokanutts, cordiale stones and some other precious roots,.....*assuring us of his friendship and offering the price for them.*' The English complied with his request and 'for the service of the Honourable Company' sent 'unto him by our Camp Bramany Ramana with a civill letter as in the Golconda Register, not requiring the money but making

a present of them, *his power increasing and he exercising so much authority in the King of Golcondas country*, that he sends all about to receive the Kings rents by his own people, and punishing the Avaldars and great men of the country at his pleasure.' Sir William Langhorne, writing in a very 'civil' tone to Shivaji, deelared: 'Wee entreat you accept of the affectionate respects wherewith wee make present of them to your Highness; and as the settlements which our Hon'ble Employers have already in your dominions obliges us to *wish you all desirable prosperity, so the great honour your noble achievements acquires you from all men who shall attaine to a right understanding of them, not only wins our reasons but our inclinations also, and wee do so highly prize the opportunitys* of doing you such services as fall within the narrow compass of a strangers power that wee account it as an instance of your kindness that you are pleased to import your mind which wee receive with all the resentments of a passion that must ever be pressing ourselves.—My Lord your Highnesses most humble, most obedient servant, W. L.' How, despite these gushing civilities, the English really comported with Shivaji, will be noticed in the next chapter. Meanwhile, President Langhorne of Fort St. George, again wrote on 17 February 1678: 'We are now to acquaint you that Sevagee, grown great and famous by his many conquests and pillageings of the Moghulls and Visopour countrys, is at length come hither with an army of 16 in 20 M. (16 to 20 thousand) horse and severall thousand of foot, raised and raising among the woods, *being unfortunately called in by the King of Golconda* or Madanna to help them to take Chengy, Vealour and Pamangoda (Pelgonda), the remainder of the sea part of the Cornatt country as farr as Porto Novo, out of the Visiapours hands, with title of Generalissimo, by which means he has gotten in a manner the possession of this country, the said King having no force to oppose him. *We have twice presented him with some rarities* of counter poysons, etc., by him desired to the value of pagodas 112 Ind. *in order the begetting a fair correspondence with him* now at first, if possible, grounding it upon the introduction of those settlements you have already in his country's at Rajapore and Carwar, the former whereof was very well taken. Of the

latter we have yet no news from our Bramany who attends his motion, but more particularly upon the King of Golcondas Meirza Mahmud Omin and our loving friend, who has some 1000 horse and 4000 foot along with him.'

The entire situation in the Karnatak changed with the entry of Shivaji therein. Shahji's scattered *jagirs* and the principality of Tanjore were now linked up with Shivaji's dominions. They attained a new significance in the history of the peninsula and became part of the new order that was emerging out of the chaos of the dark age which had intervened between the fall of Vijayanagar and the rise of the Maratha power. Vyankoji had conserved his patrimony from Shahji, but Shivaji consolidated it and gave it a new orientation. The *Chhatrapati* was no mere Jason in a search of the golden fleece, but the conservator of the greater and larger Patrimony of Hindu civilisation. 'The transactions of Shivaji in the Carnatic,' writes Dr. S. K. Aiyangar, 'and his dealings with his half-brother Venkaji (or Ekoji seem capable of an interpretation, once it is realized that *Shivaji may have cherished the ambition to stand before his great enemy, the Moghul, as the acknowledged representative of the empire of Vijaynagar* recently become extinct. The existence of the grant of Shivaji to the two sons of Sriranga, though the document is not quite above suspicion, and the issue of the coinage of which one specimen at any rate, on the model of Vijayanagar, has been recently discovered, are indications in support of what some of the Mahratta documents do record in respect of this particular idea of Shivaji. Shahji had acquired as his *jaghir* in the Carnatic territory, which could favourably compare with that of any other South Indian viceroy under Hindu rule. After the acquisition of Tanjore, Venkaji was actually in occupation of the territory of the Nayaks of Tanjore and of Ginji with a considerable portion of Mysore in addition. Madura was already decrepit and must have seemed to Shivaji capable of being brought under his imperial protection. Ikkeri was probably inclined to support him against Mysore. Mysore was perhaps the one State that was likely to prove troublesome. If Shivaji cherished such an idea, it cannot have been regarded impracticable in 1677, and all his efforts to bring his brother to

reason need not necessarily have been the result of greed. All the details of the transaction taken together seem to indicate a clearly higher motive, and that may well have been *the ambition to stand before Auranzib as the acknowledged successor of the emperors of Vijayanagar.*'

This opinion, though speculative in character, deserves special attention as coming from the Doyen of South Indian scholars who has devoted his life-time to the study of Vijayanagar history. Even though Shivaji's grant to the two sons of Sriranga, according to him, may not be 'quite above suspicion,' his main thesis is not thereby affected. If the grant should prove spurious, in its available form, its fabrication itself will serve to indicate that the scions of the last imperial family of Vijayanagar considered Shivaji great enough to receive such a compliment. The Maratha *Chhatrapati* must have appeared to them as the only protector of their honour and patrimony. This in itself constitutes the best commentary on what Shivaji attempted to do for Hindu India through his Karnatak conquests.

CHAPTER X

THE SEA FRONT

> 'All the way, as he goes along, he gives his *qual* (assurance) promising them that neither he nor his soldiers shall in the least do any wrong to anybody that takes his *qaul*, which promise he hitherto hath kept'.—Gyfford to Surat (24 May 1663).

Few Indian rulars have bestowed as much attention on the sea as did Shivaji. Situated as his new and growing State was, its western fringe was of the utmost importance, and could not be neglected for long. Though there was no major enemy as yet on the coast, its potentialities for good and evil were great as well as vital. With the keen vision and foresight that he possessed, the activities of the Siddis as well as the Buropeans (Portuguese, Dutch, French and English) were shrewdly noted by him. Despite its importance and value, neither Bijapur nor the Mughals had bestowed on the Konkan the attention it deserved. They marked the earth with ruin, but their control stopped with the shore. As Muslim rulers they were indeed anxious to protect the pilgrim traffic to Mecca; but otherwise, their interest was confined to imp-porting Arab horses and maintaining a few private ships for personal profit. Their governments as such maintained no fleets worth speaking, either for commerce or for defence, though Surat, Cambay, Broach, Bombay, Vingurla, Goa, Karwar, etc. attracted the maritime foreigners. Shivaji app-reciated the advantages better and decided to 'harness the sea'.

His first task was to eradicate the Siddis; who were not only like 'mice in the house,' a nuisance, but also a plague. They were nominally under Bijapur, but actually their own masters. They pretended to pay homage to the Adil Shah or the Mughal Emperor as it suited their convenience; but the sovereign was more dependent than the vassal so far as *de facto* power on the coast was concerned. Janjira was

their stronghold and the Gibraltar of the Muslims. For Shivaji it was a thorn in the side of his kingdom, a menace to his western defences, and a source of perpetual irritation. His determination to subjugate or oust the Siddis from their position of vantage is reflected in Oxenden's report of his negotiations at Raigad,

'I took (aecording to your Honours order),' he wrote to his superiors, 'occasion to discourse with him (i.e. Niraji Pandit) concerning the concluding of a peace betwixt the Rajah (Shivaji) and the Siddy of Danda Rajepore urging those arguments enordered in my instructions and likewise those communicated me in private by his Honour, but all were not prevalent enough to persuade him, it was not his Masters interest to prosecute that siege (of Janjira) so near a conclution, for the Rajah without doubt will have Danda either this raines or next monsoon, intending to make an assault on it speedily after his coronation, to which effect he hath enordered his best souldiers to get themselves in readyness, and hath already sent 15 pieces ordinance more to strengthen and renew the battary. He hath offered the Siddy, upon delivery of the castle, what Monsup (Mansab or rank) he shall desire, upon refusall whereof he must except the miserys that attend warr and so severe an enemy as Sevagee Rajah who, Naragee Punditt reports, vallues not the assistance the Mogulls fleete gives him nor the damage it will do his country in the future.'

The struggle for supremacy in the Konkan, however, must not be considered as a mere duel between Shivaji and the Siddis. It was part of Shivaji's programme to wrest his land from the domination of the foreigners. It was equally necessary for him to subjugate the Hindu chiefs and rajas who had either remained vassal to Bijapur or asserted their feudal independence. In the larger interest of his cause he could not leave their precarious position to be exploited by either Bijapur, the Siddis, or the Europeans. The Mughal Emperor was equally anxious to frustrate his ambitions—as much in the Konkan as on the mainland. The Maratha struggle on the sea front therefore had many facets.

We have witnessed Shivaji's relations with Lakham Savant of Kudal, in an earlier chapter, as also his expeditions on

the west coast. Since his occupation of Kalyan—Bhiwandi in October 1657, he had also taken Danda in November 1659 and Rajapur in March 1661. These activities were a source of embarrassment alike to the Bijapur authorities and the European traders. A Portuguese letter dated 16 August 1659 observes: 'The son of Captain Xagi (Shahji) who has left King Idalxa (Adil Shah), has taken over the lands near Bassein and Chaul, is getting very powerful and forces us to be careful as he has built a navy in Bhiwandi, Kalyan and Panvel, ports in the district of Bassein. We have ordered our Captain not to allow him to put the vessels to sea, in order to embarass his going out.' Another English record, five years later, states: 'Deccan and all the south coasts are all embroiled in civil wars, King against King and country against country, and Shivaji reigns victoriously and uncontrolled, that he is a terror to all the Kings and princes round about, daily increasing in strength.' Ten more years elapsed and John Fryer observed that 'Seva Gi is reckoned also as a diseased Limb of Duccan, impostumated and swoln too big for the Body: in some respects benefiting, in others discommoding it; beneficial by opposing the Mughal's entry into the Kingdom; but prejudicial in being his own Paymaster, rewarding himself most unconscionably, all Conchon the Sea Coasts, 250 Leagues, that is, from Balsore Hills to the River Gangole (Gangavaly); where neither is he limited in his extravagant Desires, execting only opportunity to gain further Inland he hath not much, the Goat (the western Ghat range) seeming to be a Natural Line of Circumvallation to the Up Country, where it is Campaign, though below Hilly; so that ascend to it by Mountains piled on one another, over whice Seva Gi hath total Dominion, the Deccanees not striving to retake anything for all he heth blocked up their Ports, which may prejudice them for the future; an irreparable Damage (Arab Steeds being the Life of their Cavalry); they having only Porto Novo beyond Tutticaree left them free.'

These European notices of Shivaji's activities and growing importance on the Konkan and Kanara coasts cover the period of about twenty years from his conquest of Kalyan (1657) to his great Karnatak campaign in 1677-78. During these two decades, it is to be recollected, Shivaji had achi-

eved many momentous things outside the Konkan: He had overthrown Afzal Khan and Shaista Khan, he had raided Surat, fought with the Mughals under Jai Singh and Dilir Khan, accepted their terms at Purandhar, gone to Agra and miraculously effected his escape therefrom, raided Surat again, defeated Mughal officers at Dindori, got himself crowned at Raigad, and triumphantly marched through Golkonda and Bijapuri Karnatak. This was a record more impressive than that of Raghu as described by Kalidasa in his *Raghuvansa*, more glorious than that of Samudragupta. He had baffled the Mughal Emperor and humbled Bijapur. Now it appeared that he had only to round off the conquests by the consolidation of the Konkan coast. This is the significance of Shivaji's doings on the west coast.

His two raids on Surat revealed to him the weakness of the Emperor in that region. His conquest of Kalyan and the Karnatak equally well demonstrated the helplessness of the Adilshahi government. Bijapur authority had long been dwindling everywhere in its dominions. That the western region was no exception to this growing paralysis was soon evident to Shivaji. The Siddis on the one side and the Marathas on the other, while being inimical towards each other, proved equally fatal to Bijapur authority. The Desais of Kudal and the minor rajas of Sunda and Bidnur were lesser fry who by their own quarrels and ambitions made matters worse for their overlord the Adil Shah. Shivaji was as ready to fish in these troubled waters as anybody else on the coast. Tempted by these opportunities he raided the Kanara coast as far south as Basrur and as much into the interior as Bidnur, Sunda and Hubli. This inevitably brought him into clash with various rivals and enemies whose varying results we are to assess in this chapter.

Many details relating to this phase of Maratha history are subjects of controversy, but we shall illustrate the situation with a few salient examples.

Shivaji raided Basrur early in 1665. It was then a port belonging to the Raja of Bidnur who was a vassal of Bijapur. While returning north along the coast after this expedition, Khawas Khan, the Bijapuri general, encountered him and attempted to block his path. Earlier Shivaji had occupied Dan-

da-Rajapur and Kharepatan; he had destroyed Vingurla and built the stronghold of Sindhudurg. At the approach of the Maratha 'all the Muhammadan governors as far as Sanquelim and Bicholin were fled,' says an English record. 'Alarmed by these happenings the Bijapur authorities tried to mobilize their forces. The governor of Phonda, the Desai of Kudal and Khawas Khan were among those ordered to rally. Shivaji kept his gain none the less. Khawas Khan was defeated and put to flight over the Ghats. Baji Ghorpade who was on his way to join the Khan, together with a division of 1,500 horse, was cut down in this connexion and Mudhol was destroyed in a punitive raid.'

'At Kudal in the Konkan lived a rebel named Lakham Savant Desai with 12,000 *hasam*,' writes Sabhasad. 'Kudal was under the Adilshahi. He sent word to Bijapur that assembling an army of horse, foot and militia, he was going to march against Shivaji to recover Konkan. To this effect he sent a verbal message. Thereupon, from Bijapur, Khawas Khan, C.-in-C., a great warrior, came to Kudal with 10,000 horsemen. Lakham Savant joined him with 12,000 *hasam* and went on reconquering Konkan. In the meantime, the Raje got the information, and selecting the army and militia marched straight on them. Baji Ghorpade, who was coming from Bijapur with 1,500 horsemen to help Khawas Khan, descended from the Ghats and halted. Thereupon the Raje sent an army against him and by a surprise attack utterly destroyed Baji Ghorpade with his personal troops and 1,200 horses were captured. A great battle was fought. Learning this news, Khawas Khan was struck with terror and fled over the Ghats and went straight to Bijapur.' The Jedhe *Shakavali* gives *Kartika krodhin*, 1586 *Shaka* (10 October-7 Nov. 1664) as the date of this event. Sarje Rao Jedhe is said to have fought valiantly in the action.

The defeat of the Desai at the hands of Shivaji is attributed by the Dutch to the want of powder and the absence of Khawas Khan: 'After Chaveschan had courageously beaten Sivasi on a plain with a small army consisting of 2000 horsemen and as many foot soldiers, Sivasi again rallied his army, divided it into three or four squadrons, and marched against that Lord in a very good order. A sharp fire of rockets was

first opened on both sides... [Shivaji met with stiff resistance at first]. Still, after a good deal of skirmishing and firing of muskets, he caused them (Lakham Savant's men) to waver. *The main causes of this defeat were the want of powder and the absence of Lord Chaveschan.*'

The treaty of Purander (12 June 1665) allowed the Marathas a free hand in Bijapuri Konkan, while Shivaji was an active ally of the Mughals in their campaign against the Adil Shah. The death of the Bijapuri general Bahlol Khan, in July 1665, was a great blow to that unfortunate kingdom. The English factory letter from Karwar to Surat dated 29 Aug. 1665 verily notes, 'The affairs of the royal drunkard at Bijapur passed from bad to worse.' The absence of Shivaji from the Deccan during his visit to Agra and his policy of peace for some time thereafter provided a short respite. But troubles again gathered, especially after the death of Ali Adil Shah on 24th Nov. 1672. We have vivid glimpses of these in the contemporary English records.

On 17 February 1673 Karwar wrote to Surat : ' We have been in double feare here, what with the Dutch on the one side and the Rajah of Cannarah and Sundas forces on the other; but wee hope in God now shall suddenly heare of a peace which may secure us from the one, and the arrivall of some forces from Vizapore here wee hope will secure us from the other. The Rajah of Cannarahs forces hath taken Mirjee Castle and are retired back to theire owne country againe, and the Rajah of Sundas forces now lye in seize of Anchola Castle ..... Muzaffer Ckaun, the Lord of this Country, is likewise sent out of Vizapore ..... against the Rajah of Cannarah ..... to chastise both the Rajahs for invading his towns ..... (At the same time internal trouble had arisen within Bednur owing to a quarrel between the Pepper Queen and her quandom favourite Timmann.) Tymmana and the Rauna of Cannarah hath ben at warrs for this three monthes, he being the chiefe man in that country and of a very mean parentage did insult too much over all people, but more especially the Bramins, which they could not brooke, so that this warr was begunn by their instigation.'

Shivaji was too ready to exploit such a situation and we read in a letter of 31 October 1673 : ' Wee suppose Sevagees

Army will not trouble your parts for some tyme, for wee have certaine intelligence that himself in person with his army of 15,000 men is gone to Sunda, a Castle near Goa, to take it from the Vizapore King, and also to attempt the conquest of the Carnatik Country, where they are fallen into Civil warr amongst themselves, and the late Rajah's wife hath called in Sevagee to her assistance and promised him a great treasure.'

We do not know what exactly transpired at Bidnur, but according to Chitnis, the Rani agreed to pay an annual tribute and to admit a Maratha Resident at her Court. Though Sarkar holds that Bidnur 'did not really become a Maratha protectorate,' we have clear testimony to the contrary in an English letter dated 24 Aug. 1676 which unequivocally declares : ' Shivaji by his Power and *Sovereignity in those parts* may bring the Sunda Rajah to a good accomdation with us, obliging to left our goods passe without molestation in the future.' The Dutch were obliged to place their factories in Kanara (Chandavar, Vingurla, etc.) under the command of their General of Malabar on account of the disturbances caused by Shivaji's inroads. Not only the coastal places but also the uplands had their trade upset. Hubli was raided in 1664-5 as well as in May 1673. After the latter loot by Pratap Rao, the English remonstrated : ' As for his last act Hubely you may tell him we have a better opinion of him than to think it was done by his order.' He answered, ' I never gave any orders to disturb the English in any way of their factories, but have ever had a good liking or opinion of them.' He also warned them as a friend : 'that we trade so little as we can into Deccan, because he is determined to make a sharp war there as soon as the rains are over.' We shall discuss Shivaji's relations with the English more fully later. Meanwhile we should recount his activities in the Konkan leading to his conflict with the Siddis and the Portuguese. Bijapur was too much paralysed by internal squabbles. The overthrow of Khawas Khan and his supporters in November 1675 was but a symptom.

On 8 April 1675 Shivaji commenced his siege of Phonda in Kudal territory. Though its governor, Muhammad Khan had provisions to last him for four months, and the garrison

was secretly helped by the Portuguese from Goa, the fort capitulated in less than four weeks (6 May). Muhammad Khan saved himself and some of his men by promising to assist Shivaji in the acquisition of the neighbouring districts. In a short time Ankola, Shiveshvar, Karwar and Kadra, came into Shivaji's hands. By 25 May, the whole of Bijapuri Kanara, down to the Gangavati river, was conquered. A Karwar letter declares, 'Sevagee hath made a thorough conquest of the country hereabouts ..... He is master of all as far as Anchola.' Another from Rajapur dated 31 May, states : 'Sevagee Rajah hath now taken all belonging to the King of Veesapore in Cunkron' (Konkan). But the major operations of Shivaji were directed against the Siddi stronghold of Janjira. Epic in its interest, nevertheless, this Trojan adventure of the Marathas miscarried. Despite his prolonged and pertinacious efforts Shivaji was destined to die without accomplishing this his greatest ambition on the sea front.

'We cannot but admire,' writes Dr. Bal Krishna, 'the spirited and determined defence exhibited by the Siddis in the long struggle which lasted for about a quarter of a century ..... It is indeed strange that the one who had swallowed a large part of the Bijapur Kingdom, who had made the Golkonda King his tributary, and who had shaken the foundations of the Mogul Empire, should have been baffled in capturing the castle of Janjira after so many heroic efforts. All his brilliant victories seem to be eclipsed by this single failure of his life. The causes of this life-long disappointment are to be traced to his inferior navy and artillery. His light vessels could never break through the cordon of big battleships placed all round the castle, nor stand the heavy fire of more than 300 cannon with which the towers and bastions of Janjira bristled.' It is well also to note that C. V. Vaidya, an enthusiastic panegyrist of Shivaji, equally generously observes that the Siddi of Janjira 'must be given the credit of obstinately maintaining his position and his small State against the continuous effort of Shivaji to subdue or destroy him.'

We have already noted that Janjira was of great importance to Shivaji as well as the Muslims. Opposite that island

fortress were Danda and Rajapur both of which Shivaji had occupied between 1659–61. Janjira was only half-a-mile out across the sea. The Marathas, with their position of vantage on the coast, could cut off the Siddis' communications with Bijapur, but the latter would retaliate by ravaging the Konkan. Raghunath Ballal Korde, says Sabhasad, had wrested the coast from the Siddis, but after his death. the conduct of the Habshis underwent a change. Then the Raje sent the celebrated Vyankoji Datto, who devastated and annexed the land of the Siddis. He came after inspiring such terror that the Siddis opened negotiations for peace. But the Raje did not accept the terms but remained in the Siddi's country and strengthened himself by the erection of new forts at various places. The Siddis had to obtain provisions from other the lands in order to subsist. 'On that account the Raje fitted out ships in the sea.' He also fortified some submarine rocks and built strongholds in the sea: 'Uniting ships with forts, the Raje saddled the sea.'

Building *ghurabs*, *tarandes*, *tarus*, *galvats*, *sibas* and *pagars*, he appointed two *Subahdars* (a Muslim *Darya Sarang* and a *Bhandari Mai Nayak*), constituting a *suba* of 200 ships: In this manner was the navy equipped. The Raje's ships then began to plunder the cities and forts belonging to the Mughals and the Firangis. They fought at various places and obtained grains and other provisions: 'In this manner 700 ships were out in the sea.' Not all of these ships were intended to fight the Habshis, the Firangis, or the pirates. Some of them sailed as far as Mocha in western Arabia, loading them at Jaitapur (2 miles up the Rajapur river) with goods of considerable value. On 12 March 1665, the English factors noted that from each of the 8 or 9 'most considerable ports in the Deccan' seized by Shivaji, there 'set out 2 or 3 or more trading vessels yearly to Persia, Basra, Mocha, etc.' Later, in April 1669, they observed several of his rice-boats being destroyed by a storm, off Karwar,—one of the ships being richly laden.

In the same year, Shivaji renewed his attack on Janjira with great vigour but failed. In 1671 the Siddis even recovered Danda fort by the bold *coup* of their captain Qasim. Shivaji tried to secure English assistance, but the Surat

authorities advised their factors '*not to positively promise* him grenadoes, mortar pieces, and ammunition he desires, *nor to absolutely deny him, in regard we do not think it convenient to help him against Dunda, which place, if it were in his possession would prove a great annoyance to Bombay.*'

Aurangzeb, on the contrary, sent a fleet of 36 vessels, great and small, (towards the close of 1672) from Surat to help the Siddi. These ships perpetrated great havoc in the Maratha ports of Dabhol, Kelshi, etc., and destroyed above 500 of their vessels. The French supplied some ammunition to Shivaji in August following, while the Dutch proffered 22 ships if Shivaji would help them conquer Bombay from the English. Shivaji, however, declined the assistance on the terms demanded by the Dutch.

The Mughal fleet returned in May 1673 and continued its work of destruction until October. But in March 1674 there was a swing in favour of Shivaji, though in the naval battle of Satavli the admirals of both sides (Siddi Sambal and Daulat Khan) were wounded. The Siddis lost 100 men against 44 of the Marathas. The Siddis then retreated to Hareeshvar, 21 miles south of Janjira. Shivaji followed up this victory by reducing the whole of South Konkan from Rajapur to Bardes. During the next two years (1675-77) he was engaged in delivering his final assault on Janjira itself.

In August 1676, 10,000 reinforcements were sent under Moro Pant *Pesva*; but the heroic effort was frustrated in December. Desultory attacks on either side continued to the very end of Shivaji's life, but the conquest of Janjira remained an unfulfilled aspiration. All that the Marathas could do was to occupy Khanderi (Kennery) island, 30 miles N. of Janjira and 11 ms. S. of Bombay as consolation prize and hold it against the combined attacks of the Siddis and the English.

The part played by the Europeans—particulary the Portuguese and the English—in this struggle for supremacy in the Konkan needs closer examination. The French were as yet timid and the Dutch ineffective despite their hatred of both the English and the Portuguese. It is not to be forgotten that their very position and interests made the Europeans play a double game. Duplicity was the very breath of their

nostrils, and diplomatic negotiations were intended to cut both ways if possible. Protestations of friendship for political or commercial reasons, therefore, under such circumstances, lacked even the passing emotional honesty of lover's pledges.

Antonio de Mello de Castro, the new Portuguese Viceroy, took office on 16 December 1662. Shivaji was then already at war with Shaista Khan. On 26 April 1660 de Castro wrote to Shivaji: 'I send to the North a nobleman of such authority and experience that he can arrange with your Highness all that is practicable and convenient to both of us. *However it will be with great secrecy, because in this consist the good results which I desire for Your Highness*, not only on account of your brave acts but also *for the good friendship which the Portuguese will find in Your Highness ..... And I hope that from the present struggle Your Highness will come out victorious and* that from the frame of your victories the terror in your antagonist will increase.' Following this, on 5 May 1663, he ordered his Captain General of the North (Dom Alvaro de Ataide) not to allow any foodstuffs or provender to go to the people of the Mughal Emperor. It would be expedient, he said, to prevent *with all dissimulation* that any kind of provision should go to the camp of the Mughal in order that for want of it he would leave this neighbourhood, and thus Shivaji would have a chance of being able to accomplish his intentions of injuring the enemy who, *as he is so powerful, would be better far away and not such a close neighbour.*'

This, however, did not prevent de Castro from writing to Raja Jai Singh, on 31 March 1665. *It pleases me very much to have so near such a good neighbour.* Between our king, my Lord and the King Sultan Aurangzib exists peace and friendship which has lasted for several years.....*From these lands was never given help or favour to Shivaji.....I hereby send orders to the North that they should not give Shivaji any kind of favour nor admit any of his people into our lands, and the same will be done from this side.*' Only eighteen days later, the same de Castro again advised his Chief Captain of the North (Ignacio Sarmento de Carvalo), 'The affairs of the Mughal which give so much anxiety.....are, however, worthy of great consideration, and thus *it is meet we deal with them*

with great prudence, so that we neither give them occasion to break with us, nor should we show them that we doubt them; and, *because all their complaint is born of their imagination that we show favour to Shivaji, you should order that nothing should be done from which they could have this suspicion.* However if, *without this risk* you could *secretly* give any aid with munitions and foodstuffs to Shivaji *you should do it for money*; because it is not desirable that if he is driven from his lands, the Mughal should remain the lord of them. *But this should be done with such great caution that never should he be able to guess, much less verify it.*' Further, 'To Shivaji you will write how much better it is for him and for us that his retreat, in case it should be necessary to do so, should not be Chaul, but rather to Goa, *where he would be more safe, and we would not have to break with the Mughal;* and in this way we would be able to be intermediary in any conference when fortune changes the state of things. *Also emphasise that he would obtain the greatest safety in this island of Goa, which he could not have in Chaul*, and thus he should be persuaded that it is best for him, and we should save ourselves as far as possible for us to do so.'

On the top of all this, de Castro felt obliged, in August 1655, to direct his Vicar of Bassein (Fr. Daoi ma Vicira) to wait upon Raja Jai Singh and to *congratulate him on his victory over Shivaji* saying: '*I took from him all the transport ships* which the Mahratta Shivaji had carried off on the pretence he was coming to my land, *thus preventing that he should provision the fortresses so that he could resist for a long time*; as the success of this movement has shown: because *for lack of provisions they gave themselves up to him.*'

In 1669, the Portuguese actively helped the Siddi against Shivaji. On 27 May 1669, learning that the position of Danda was precarious, they considered: 'This matter is of vital importance (and decided) that it is not convenient to the State to have such a powerful enemy in the neighbourhood. It appeared well to us to order you to assist the fortress of Danda with some soldiers, powder, and shot necessary for the defence. *This can be done under the pretence* that he (the Siddi) being our vassal we are bound to help him *or under any other pretext which you might think more fit.* On 21 August, again,

the same Portuguese official (Acting Governor) gave strict orders that the Siddi should be succoured by all means against the attack of Shivaji.

Finding that his efforts were thus being frustrated by the Firangis, Shivaji sent his *vakil*, Vithal Pandit, to Goa. Consequently a treaty was signed between the Marathas and the Portuguese, on 20 February, 1670, on the even basis of reciprocity. Clause 2 stated: 'They should not give refuge nor provisions of any kind to the Habshi of Danda, and the Portuguese should send orders to this effect to all their ports.' This was agreed to. It was also accepted 'that there shall exist a strong friendship between both the parties, by sea and land, and should anything be done without reason, a report should be made by Raja Shivaji to the Governor of India, and in the same manner by the said Governor to the Raja Shivaji, and *without obtaining satisfaction in this way this peace and friendship should not be broken*'. Strangely, while these negotiations were going on in Goa, on 16 January 1670, a letter to Lisbon declared: 'Shivaji Raje has made himself master of the Konkan and levies taxes by ways which the inhabitants take ill and therefore abandon their lands. *He makes a very undesirable neighbour*. He is not firm in his promise, and *he is to be dreaded more when he pretends to be your friend*: He lives on theft and cunning; this is the fellow who entered Bardez in 1667; *at present we have to defend our lands with great caution*.'

Under the plea that the Marathas had seized a Portuguese vessel at Daman and taken in to Dabhol, in November 1670, despite the treaty engagements, the Portuguese retaliated by capturing 12 ships belonging to Shivaji and took them to Bassein. However, the Portuguese Captain of Chaul (Louis Alvares Pereira de Lacesda) sheltered refugees from Shivaji's territories while they were harried by Aurangzeb's men towards the close of 1672. 'Shivaji and his secretary and *subedar*,' says the Captain, 'wrote to me thanking me for the favour done to those people, to whom I replied that I did nothing but keep the terms of the peace between Shivaji and the State and that no other motive moved me.' Reporting all that then transpired between him and the Maratha envoy the writer concludes: 'The said physician informed me that

Shivaji wanted to make himself a vassal of His Highness, for he had learnt that others had done the same, and on finding the Portuguese disposed to protect him, he would send one to Goa to treat about this with your Excellency.'

Flattered by this, the Viceroy, Louis de Mendonca Furtado sent a copy of this report to His Majesty the King of Portugal on 19 January, 1673. But in reply he was told: 'Having seen what you have written in your letter of 19th February 1673, by which you informed us of the condition to which you have reduced Shivaji without waging war, about his being forced to offer to the Captain of Chaul the Government of Chaul and to be the vassal of the State, I think it advisable to tell you to be careful regarding the designs of Shivaji. You should treat with him with all caution and diligence necessary for the safety of this State without neglect, attending also to the insolence with which he treats friends and enemies alike without keeping faith with any one.

The reversal of the Portuguese policy towards Shivaji became evident at the siege of Phonda on 8 April 1675. About the middle of the month, when they realized that the besieged needed help, they secretly sent ten boat-loads of provisions along with some men. But when these were intercepted by the Marathas the Portuguese disavowed them. It is not quite correct therefore to assert, as Sarkar has done, that the Portuguese 'remained strictly neutral during his (Shivaji's) wars with the Mughals and Bijapur'. The fact is that the Portuguese, at this time, were a decadent power in India 'anxious only to hold their own, and timidly averting an armed encounter with every other State by employing friendly appeal, patient endurance, and diplomatic evasion'.

Among the external causes of the Portuguese decline were the rivalry of the Dutch and the English. These two latter powers were constantly at war among themselves and both invoked Shivaji's assistance against each other. An English letter speaking of their Dutch rivals says, 'Their envy is so great towards us that to take out one of our eyes, they will lose both their own.' The jealous and envious Portuguese, declares another, 'have endeavoured all that lay in their power to obstruct our settlement; the (Mughal) Governor of Surat hath not been wanting also to use his policy to under-

mine us; and Siddy Sambole with his Fleete hath been no small impediment. The Dutch with their powerful fleete designed to have swallowed us up, but blessed be God who hath hitherto preserved us and rendered all their evill designes advantageous (to us); *Sevagee onely hath proved*, and that for his own interest sake, *our fairest friend and noblest enemy*.' It is important to note that this is the dictum of Gerald Aungier, English Governor of Bombay. Yet sadly, the English factors–particularly in the Bombay settlement—proved anything but friendly towards Shivaji. Elsewhere also they were deeply suspicious of his designs despite outer civilities. For example, at Madras, 'Sevagee Rajia, having sent the Agent a letter of 22nd September last (1677) by two of his spys, desiring us to supply him with Ingeniers, *to which was returned him a civil excuse*, it being wholly unfit for us to meddle in it, there being many dangers consequent thereon, as well of increasing his power, as of rendering both Golconda and the Mughal our enemys, all these parts being spread with his Spys and himself and army now come nearer this way, within two dayes march of this place.' All available 'Ingeniers' were employed '*to prevent any design of so evill a neighbour as Sevagee*.'

On the West Coast there was less of civility and more of hostility. The English had their factories at Bombay, Rajapur and Karwar; and in the interior at Hubli, Athni, Dharangaon, etc. At Surat they had their Headquarters. Their interests were primarily commercial, though exigencies of time and situation obliged them to handle fire-arms and ammunition. '*In general we must needs say*,' *declared their Directors in London*, '*that peace and not warr is the Element in which Trade thrives and flourishes and tis not the interest of a Company of Merchants to launch into those great charges which unavoidably attend it, especially where the opposition is considerable and the event very hazardous*.' Rajapur, however, proved this a mere pious intention.

In January 1660 Shivaji's captain Doraji raided the port. Though the English had no business to take sides in the action they openly assisted the Muslims. The Marathas, infuriated by their interference, caught hold of their broker Balaji at Jaitapur. In order to secure his release they sent Mr.

Philip Gyffard into the Maratha camp, but he too was taken prisoner. Consequently, on 13 February, Mr. Revington wrote to Shivaji, offering to assist him in the conquest of Danda-Rajapur, should he be pleased to release the two prisoners. Orders were actually issued to set Balaji and Gyffard at liberty, but some suspicious activity on the part of the latter led to Gyffard's removal to another place of security. On 23 February Revington, taking the law into his own hands, way-laid the party, 10 miles away from Rajapur, and romantically rescued the prisoner. Obviously he got information from Gyffard himself. It is evident, therefore, that immediate release of Gyffard was not effected because of his unlawful conduct, and not being, as it was alleged, 'kept by a rogue Brahman in Kharepatan castle out of the lucre and expectation of a bribe'.

The second Maratha attack on Rajapur took place in March 1661. This time too, as Sarkar has said, 'the English were clearly in the wrong'. While Shivaji was besieged in Panhala by Siddhi Jauhar, from 2 March to 22 September 1660, the English supplied some ammunition to the besiegers for 'tossing balls with a flag that was known to be the English's'. Shivaji's second raid on the Rajapur factory was intended to punish the English for their egregious conduct. On this occasion he carried away, besides much valuable booty, Messrs. Henry Revington, Richard and Randolph Taylor, and Philip Gyffard as prisoners. Before they were removed from Rajapur, Shivaji offered to release them if they would agree to help him in the capture of Rajapur. He also promised to give them a good salt-port besides. It may be recalled that Revington had himself offered these terms an year earlier. But now the arrogant prisoners declined to discourse about it, until they should be actually set at liberty. When a ransom was demanded, they declared that they had lost everything in the sack of their factory. Then they tried to negotiate once more proposing conditions leaving 'a hole to creep out of their obligation'. When this failed to deceive Shivaji, they threatened to invoke Imperial assistance through their Surat authorities. Finally, chafing under their loss of liberty, the 'disconsolate prisoners' petulantly complained of the apathy of their compatriots — the President

and Council at Surat. The result was the following well-merited rebuke:— 'How you came to be in prison you know very well. It was not for defending the Company's goods, 'twas for going to the siege of Panhala and tossing balls with a flag that was known to be the English's. None but what is rehearsed is the cause of your imprisonment'.

Exasperated by this embarrassing situation the prisoners attempted to escape from gaol, but were apprehended and kept in closer confinement at Raigad. Failing in all their stratagems and designs, the English at last appealed to Shaista Khan the Mughal viceroy in the Deccan. Unfortunately, however, as we have already witnessed, the Khan himself came to grief (5 April 1663) at the hands of Shivaji. On 3 February, the same year, the Council had commissioned *H. M. S. Covertite* to seize Shivaji's richly freighted ships bound for Mocha. But only two days afterwards the prisoners were released, after nearly two years, with an assurance that the English would receive protection in future. It is amusing to note the fulminations of the Surat Council immediately after this unexpected relief : They declared that they had 'desisted from calling that perfidious rebel Sevagee to an account beeause they had neither conveniency of force or time.' They were still determined, none the less, upon avenging the wrong done to their 'loving brethren' as well as the loss inflicted upon their Masters' property at Rajapur, though they sadly realised, 'as yet we are altogether incapable for want of shipping and men necessary for such an enterprise : Wherefor patience'!

Then followed Shivaji's two raids on Surat in 1664 and 1670. We have already described them and discussed their consequences. In 1674 the English sought the opportunity of Shivaji's coronation at Raigad to make it up with him. Oxenden's embassy was deemed a great success by all the English factors in India. On 10 July 1674 the Bombay Council noted with satisfaction, 'Mr. Henry Oxenden returned from Sevagy with whom a *firm peace* is settled and articles signed between the Honble. Company and him.' The report was communicated to Surat as well as Madras. The latter expressed warm appreciation of *that eminent service you have done your Honble. employers in settling soe faire*

a correspondence with Sevagee ..... and soe reasonable overtures for advantages both in traffique and neighbourhood, now that the establishment of his conquests renders him no less concerned for the encouragement of trade than he was formerly for plunder. London too was likewise informed of this settlement in their letter, dated 20 August 1674, enclosing and commending Oxenden's fuller report.

The preamble to the treaty read: 'Articles of peace, union and friendship between the noble prince Sevagee Rajah and the Hon. English East India Company : 1. That from this day forward, there be a true, firm and inviolable peace and amity between the noble prince Sevajee Rajah and the Hon. E. E. I. Co., their successors and assignees, and between the lands, countries, subjects and inhabitants of both parties of what degree and quality soever.

2. That all acts of enmity, and discord, shall cease and be abolished, and that both parties shall abstain and forbear from all plunderings, depredations and injuries whatsoever, public and private, in all places both by sea and land.

3. That the said Sevagee Rajah and his subjects and all other inhabitants in his Dominions, shall use and treat the English kindly and with respect and honour due to them as friends and confederates, so that they may freely pass by land and water into the countrys, cities and towns belonging to Sevagee Rajah, and there continue so long as they please, and buy provisions and likewise trade and traffick in goods and commodities of all sorts, paying the usual duties, and be obedient to the civil Government of the respective places, the same kindness to be reciprocally intercharged to the subjects of Sevagee Rajah on the island of Bombay.'

Peace is never the outcome of compacts and agreement. Where there is no harmony of interests there cannot be lasting amity. Like the treaty between the Portuguese and Shivaji this one also was not calculated to last long. The hollowness of the protestations of 'firm friendship' was soon exposed when, in November 1674, Shivaji requested the Hon'ble.Company's Bombay office to supply him fifty guns. The English had been importing guns for sale and Bombay advised Surat, 'It will certainly be very good for the Company to ease their large dead-stock here by the sale of some of the guns and es-

pecially the two great brass guns which lye heavy upon us.' But the President and Council, having duly debated, judged it impolitic and inexpedient to part with them; 'they are of such use and service by the command they have into the sea, besides the repute they give to the place, that *although they are a charge, yet wee shovld blush to thinke that either Sevagee or any others should be master of them.*' Surat therefore ordered: 'Though Sevagee should profer you ready money for your two brass gunns, yet we would not have you part with them without a positive order from us; *for it is a matter of great consequence and we know not how far he may be trusted.*'

The guns remained unsold in Bombay until 21 January 1678, certainly, when Swally Marine reported to the Company: 'The great brass gunns are remayning at the fort (Bombay), *no person appearing to buy them.* Indeed Sevagee would be our chapman for them and many more things, but for mony or expectation of payment his great debt to your Honours may witness what small punctuallity may be expected from him. *If any buyer presents (we) shall dispose of them.*' On the face of it, this was not a correct report. They were not willing to sell the guns to Shivaji in spite of his 'extraordinary kinde letter..... together with a present of 5 loads of ordinary stuffs and a confirmation of the order for the President of the mony according to agreement at Rajapore and other priviledges which he hath granted to the English in his country.'

On 1 January 1675, Maratha troops, while campaigning in Mughal territory, raided Dharangaon (near Burhanpur in Khandesh). Considerable damage was done to the English factory there, and property worth Rs. 10,000 was looted. The English factors protested that they were at peace with Shivaji, but the Maratha troops paid no heed. Representations were then made to Shivaji, but he too did not admit their claims to compensation. Losses in enemy territory were obviously not contemplated in the Raigad undertaking. Even Bombay observed: 'Sevagee and wee in these parts keep a faire understanding and good correspondence and we question not but it will continue; *however* we shall make a full demand of the Companys and factors loss there of him and *procure for the future if possible we can*, Coles (Kauls)

for the English factors and Brokers *in all places where our investments are made* that none of his forces at any time molest them '

It is noteworthy to observe that Shivaji acceded to these requests and granted *Kauls* for future security, though at first he considered the English demands 'very unreasonable.' Absurd accounts were given by Samuel Austin in his letters to Surat; but the Surat authorities in their communication to London stated: 'Satisfaction could not be procured, *Sevagee declaring that he was not lyable to make good any losse wee sustained in his enemyes country against whome he prosecuted a just war*; he blamed the Generall of his Army much for violence done us: and to the end wee should not be subject to such injuries hereafter,he gave us his coles or passports for that place and also for many other factoryes. Austin, however, was not appeased and persisted in asking for his personal losses.

Rajapur and Karwar, too, had suffered much on account of constant war in their vicinity. Messrs. Child and Oxenden were specially deputed, as experienced men, to set matters right in those two places. They obtained from Shivaji 'effectuall orders to his Ministers together with his Cole or passe for their future security.' Nevertheless the English factories continued to suffer as there was no peace in the land and not all Shivaji's officers were equally sympathetic. We find, in May 1676, Surat warning Rajapur 'to be very circumspect and cautious in your dealings and contracts with Sevagee's ministers, for wee experience them to be more subtle and perfidious every day than other. Not only Shivaji's men but other local cheiftians proved equally a source of trouble. And to make matters worse, the weavers and other workmen entrusted with money ran away, as at Hubli.

Hubli was 'a great inroad town and a mart of very considerable trade.' English records speak of the town as 'that mark of our Carwarr factors where we sell and buy most of the goods that post affords us.' The Marathas first looted it in 1664-5, but little damage was done to the English factory. However, in 1673, the English lost much and, failing to get satisfaction from Shivaji, threatened to take some 'smart course to revenge the wrongs'. Shivaji, as we have noticed

before, explained that the action was unauthorised, professed friendship towards the English and advised them 'that we trade so little we can into the Deccan because he is determined to make a sharp war there so soon as the rains are over'. The demand for compensation was unsubstantiated: 'However he desires to see the particulars of our loss, which we could not show him having not received it from you.' All the same the English were getting impatient and planning some 'smart course'. Not only Hubli and Rajapur, but also Athni and Karwar had suffered. 'Though we conceive the Rajah himself doth not desire to breake friendship with us, but would grant us what is reasonable, yett his officers have so little regard to his orders that they are not to be trusted.'

At first (14 June 1676) they thought of improving matters by replacing their native agents Narain Shenvi at Raigad by an Englishman: 'And wee are of opinion, had you sent an Englishman at first and expostulated the matter a little roughly with him; or had sent Girder, for whome they have a far greater reapect than your Naran Sunay, they would sooner have complyed with you than now they are like to doe.' But on 29 September 1676 they commissioned Captain Robert Fisher to threaten the coastal shipping unless the English were better treated: 'for as wee doe noe injury nor offer any injustice or affront to any nation whatsoever, soe wee are resolved to suffer none from any, but to vindicate the Company's right and honour in the manner wee cann.'

'Wee had once great hopes that Sevajees country would have proved advantageous to the Hon'ble Companys trade', they mournfully declared, 'and did believe he would have been soe wise and understand his own interest soe farr as to have kept a faire and just correspondence with us, but wee now find (17 Oct. 1676) that soe long as that pirate and universall robber lives, that hath noe regard to friend nor foe, God nor man, there can be noe security in any trade in his country; wherefore wee have determined to dissolve the factory of Rajpore soe soon as wee can call in our debts ..... Wee have not consigned them any goods this yeare nor shall wee, till wee can bring Sevagee to a better understanding with us.

The same intention wee have for Carwarr if it continues long under his jurisdiction, and wee would have you alsoe withdraw all trade and correspondence out of his country ..... Were it not for our factors and the Company's estate yet remaining at Rajpore wee would take a more smart course with him and doe ourselves justice on the first vessels wee could meet with all belonging to his ports; but for this wee must take some more convenient opportunity.'

Nevertheless, the Surat authorities climbed down only a week later (25 Oct. 1676) when business considerations cooled their temper. They wrote to Bombay : 'Revoking all former orders touching Brawts (Varrants or Bhatty), wee doe require you to receive the Hon'ble. Companys debts due from Sevajee in plate, *on as cheap terms as you can best agree.*' But no consistent policy was arrived at. The factors at Rajapur, Karwar and Hubli, however, were instructed to get in as much of their outstanding debts as possible 'before the coming downe of our Europe shipps, and what goods you have made provision of to be in readiness with yourselves;' also 'we would have you deale plainely with Annagee Punditt, and press him home, either let him make us complete satisfaction or let him know the factory shall be withdrawne; and that you may be ready, we would have you soe dispose affairs that upon order you may without faile embark with what belongs to the Hon'ble Compánys'.

That the English could not get away so easily was revealed to them when Mr. Everage escaped from Rajapur : 'The Soobedarr sent to us for the key of our warehouse ..... the which we refused to doe. [Then he took account of the stores and] sealed up the door with the Rajah seale'. Meanwhile hostilities had started between the English and the Marathas over ' the unhappy business of Hendry Kendry'.

We have before alluded to Shivaji's capture and occupation of the island of Khandery (Kennery) near Bombay. Underi (Hendry) is only 12,00 yards from the mainland. Together these two islets constituted the " Hendry Kendry " of perhaps, the most melodramatic episode in Anglo-Maratha history.

Shivaji had attempted to fortify Khanderi in 1672, but failed. Owing to the combined opposition of the Mughals,

the Siddis and the English, he was obliged to withdraw. The *Siva-Digvijaya Bakhar* says : ' Doulat Khan and Mai Naik Bhandari proceeded at the head of their squadrons to fortify the island of Khanderi. They were going to build a fort, but the English ships came from Bombay, saw the extent of the projected fortifications and wrote to Yakut Khan at Janjira. The Habshis ... laid siege to Khanderi, with the cooperation of the English, and demanded that no building should be constructed on their frontier. The forces were not strong enough to fight the enemies; so the Bhandari concluded a treaty, came away amicably and informed the Maharaja of what had happened. '

Shivaji took up this project more seriously in August 1679. The English once again protested saying that they had ' allways supposed (Hendry Kendry) to belong to us'. But the real reason was that they perceived it ' little policy to suffer so potent and voracious a Prince to possess himself of soe considerable a post without disputing his title thereunto. His designes cannot be otherwise then to have check on the whole trade of this (Bombay) Island and adjacent parts, keeping there allwayes a fleett of small brigantines to cruse up and downe ... If he is suffered to build, it will be hard disputing with him hereafter, *but at present wee suppose standing on our tearmes and owning it as ours*, with a seeming resolution to obstruct him, may make him desist'.

This claim had never before been put forth in 1672 or 1674. Clause 18 of the Raigad treaty as drafted by the English themselves read: 'That the English, and other inhabitants upon the Island Bombay, shall have free liberty to fetch firewood from the adjacent islands opposite to the main, without any obstruction from Sevagee's people, or *any custom to be demanded or paid for the same*, to whom strict prohibition to be given to prevent misunderstandings.' It is clear from this that the claim of Hendry Kendry as 'allwayes supposed to belong unto us ' was only a pretext and afterthought. Besides, when the Siddi occupied Hendry, as a counterpoise to Shivaji's occupation of Kendry, on 9 January 1680, the English—far from objectiong—actually encouraged and assisted him. They simply wrote to London: 'The Syddy Admirail of the King of India's fleete hath taken and

fortifyed another little Island'. Indeed, the Siddi proved more obnoxious than the Maratha : His success ' soe puft up the Syddy that he now presumes to give laws in all that Bay (solely your Honrs.' Royalty) requiring all vessells from your Island to take his passes, otherwise will seize on them; besides his men coming in great numbers ashore are so insolent and abusive that your Deputie Governour and Councill write us (Surat) that they are not able to bear it, and that if it be not suddenly remedyed, some dangerous consequences will ensue'.

The reason why the English put up with the Siddi is thus frankly stated : ' Our intention was to have complained to this Governor thereof : but he is soe exasperated at making a peace with Sevagee that he not only encourages but abets the Syddy in these abuses, which your affaires here will not suffer us at present otherwise to remedy; therefore it will highly concern your Honrs. speedily to take some effectual course for redress of these growing evills (with divers others in your affaires here, — too many now to be repeated) otherwise you will suddenly lose your Island and all your Northern trade'.

Despite the combined and most determined hostility of the English and the Siddis, however, the Marathas continued to occupy Khanderi and went on with the work of fortifying it. Successive attempts of the English, from 3 September 1679 to 28 January 1680, to frustrate their efforts were most valiently withstood by them. Neither naval brow-beating nor diplomatic blandishments deflected them from their firm resolve to hold the island at all costs. The foolhardy attempt of Lieut. Thorpe, on 19 September, to effect a forced landing ended in a tragedy : Thorpe himself got killed and his *shibar* was captured. A blockade was organized from 20 September to 9 October, but proved equally futile. The naval engagements between the contemptible ' mosquito craft ' of the Marathas and the better equipped ships of ' the Queen of the Ocean ' during a whole month (18 Oct.—18 Nov.) brought no better result. On 31 October Shivaji threatened a counter-blockade of Bombay. But on 5 November the English squadron (comprising the HUNTER, the FORTUNE, 2 *machuas*, and 5 *shibars*) drove the Maratha fleet into Nagothna creek where

it was bottled up until 10 November. Then the Siddis joined the English and carried on a relentless war against the Marathas, by land and sea. They occupied Underi (Hendry) island, as a counterpoise to Khanderi, and soon made themselves an irksome nuisance to their English allies who made peace with Shivaji.

This sorry episode was communicated to London in the following terms: 'After exceeding trouble and difficulty wherein Mr. Child, your new Deputy Governor, hath used great pains and industry, a peace is concluded with Sevagee: wherein 1. (we) have been forced to permit his possession of the Island in the mouth of your port of Bombay, finding wee were not able with our present strength to force him from it; 2. what vessells taken from us, he is to make satisfaction for, and on which account wee have already received 100 Candy of beetlenuts; 3. likewise, what men he tooke in them to returne back, which is performed; 4. liberty for your factors at Carwarr and Rajapore to come away at their owne conveniencys; and 5. to clear his former account.'

No better commentary could be offered on the incident than the remarks of the Court of Directors of the East India Company (London): 'Now we come to treat of the business of Bombay, which by the hostilities lately entered into with Sevagee about Hendry Kendry, renews and aggravates our further charge and trouble when we hoped we had arrived to an undisturbed and prosperous posture of affaires, and that the Island Revenues would have quite eased us of further expenses and have yielded somewhat of retribution for those excessive charges we have laid out upon it. But we are sorry to find it otherwise upon this unhappy quarrel we are fallen into, though upon what grounds began by Sevagee we know not; but however it be, the conduct of our men by Lieutenent Thorpe was very unhappy, who either through drunkenness or great unadvisedness ran himself into the loss of his life and his party into that mischief which befell them, so that foolishly if not madly they fell into blood before you used the medium of accommodation for peace, and the endeavouring it afterwards when Sevagee had obtained and maintained his post and could not be removed from it, we doubt will either be to noe purpose or noe wayes to our honour or

advantage.' So it turned out in the end. As Dr. Fryer observed: Amidst these Wars, and rumours of Wars, we quietly laid down our Arms and leave Seva Gi and Syddy alone to contend for our stony piece of Ground on Henry Kenry; how much to our Honour or Reproach may be gathered from the language we have daily cast in our Teeth: 'Why Vaunts your Nation? What Victories have you achieved? What has your Sword done? Who ever felt your power? What do you possess? We see the Dutch outdo you; the Portugalls have behaved themselves like Men; every one runs you down: you can scarce keep Bombain, which you got (as we know) not by your Valour, but compact; And will you pretend to be Men of War or cope with our Princes? It's fitter for you to live on Merchandise and submit to us.'

CHAPTER XI

THE CRISIS

> 'This Kingdom was invaded by a powerful enemy in the person of Aurangzeb. He used all his valour and resources, in wealth and materials, for the destruction and conquest of this Kingdom. But all his efforts proved futile, by the grace of God.'—*Adna-patra*.

THE true test of a living organism is its eapacity to survive a crisis. The Maratha State created by Shivaji, in the course of less than three decades, proved its vitality during the thirty years that followed his death on 4 April 1680. Indeed, if the Darwinian test of survival is to be applied to the Mughal Empire and the Maratha Kingdom, both of which were struggling for existence—not by the tame principle of 'live and let live', but by the militant method of exterminating the rival—the Marathas proved their fitness to survive by the eternal and immutable law of evolution. While the grandiose structure of the Mughal imperial system was visibly tottering to its fall, the young and vigorous Maratha power was advancing in a crescendo of staggering success. In the words of their most vigilant critic, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, 'The Marathas were no longer a tribe of banditti or local rebels, but the one dominating factor of Deccan politics, and an enemy all-pervasive throughout the Indian peninsula, elusive as the wind, the ally and rallying point of all the enemies of the Delhi empire and all disturbers of public peace and regular administration throughout the Deccan and even in Malwa, Gondwana and Bundelkhand'. This is a very correct estimate of the Maratha *body politic* at the death of Shivaji, as will be amply borne out by any impartial examination, howsoever searching, of the happenings from 1680 to 1707 and after.

Aurangzeb was the most inveterate enemy of not merely the 'execrable wretch Siva', but also of the Maratha power which survived him. With bitter chagrin Aurangzeb declar-

ed : 'My armies were employed against him (Shivaji) for nineteen years, but nevertheless, his State has always been increasing'. The English factors verily obsvered : 'He is so inveterate against the Raja (Sambhaji) that he hath thrown off his *pagri* and sworn never to put it on again till he hath either killed, taken or routed him out of his country.' But by a strange irony of Fate, despite the destruction of Sambhaji, the rout of Rajaram, and the capture of Shahu, it was Aurangzeb's empire and not that of the Marathas that was undermined by his ceaseless war of over forty years.

Maharashtra had met with her first crisis when she fell before the Khaljis and the Tughlaqs in the fourteenth century. Until the rise of Shivaji her emergence as an independent political entity could not have been even predicted. So long as Shivaji was alive, the only crisis she had to face was when he was virtually a captive at Agra with dire possibilities. Of course earlier, anything might have happened at his fateful meeting with Afzal Khan. But Shivaji appeared to have a charmed life. Indeed, 'Sevagy hath dyed so often,' wrote the English in May 1680, 'that some begin to thinke him immortall'! The real crises, however, came with perturbing persistence when Shivaji was dead. They were due partly to internal and partly to external causes. The former arose out of the exigencies to which the medieval monarchy was everywhere exposed, viz. the dual curse of succession disputes and the incalculable element of the personal character of the successor to sovereign authority. To look no farther than the thirty years following Shivaji's death (1680-1710), Maharashtra was confronted with crises arising out of these two factors at least four times : 1. During the succession dispute between the supporters of Sambhaji and Rajaram (1680-81); 2. in 1689, when Sambhaji fell and Rajaram had to seek refuge in Ginji; 3. in 1700, when Rajaram died leaving two sons (Shivaji and Sambhaji)by two different wives; and 4. in 1707, when Shahu was released by the astute imperialists in order to confound the Marathas who were already in the toils of a civil war.

The external causes of what we might describe as the SUPER-CRISIS consisted of a combination of enemies, great and small, who surrounded the Marathas on all sides:

1.The Mughals; 2.Bijapur until its extinction in 1686; 3. the Siddis of Janjira; and 4. the Portuguese—to mention only those powers with whom the nascent Maratha State had actually to wage war. Among these the Mughals alone were the most formidable; the rest being mere auxillaries. We shall consider the latter before the former; the minor before the major.

The Adilshahi had long been a-dying as we witnessed in the preceding chapters. The succession of the boy Sikandar had indeed been the beginning of the end. The squabbles among the Afghans and the Deccanis had become chronic in the absence of a strong and dominating Sultan. The State appeared to have been marked by an adverse Fate, and misfortunes entered every gate. Gone were the days when by a Muslim *entente* the great and glorious Vijayanagar Empire was overthrown under Adilshahi leadership. Gone too were the days when, in alliance with the weaker Qutbshahi of Golkonda, Muslim dominion was spread over the Karnatak regions. Gone even were the days when, in cooperation with the Mughals, Bijapur could obstruct — though not prevent or frustrate—the growth of the Maratha power. The Adil Shah could not even create an effective local diversion in the Deccan while Shivaji was away in Karnatak (1677-78) with the larger portion of his army. Nay, ' Jamshid Khan, since the death of the Nawab (Bahlol Khan, on 23 Dec. 1677) found himself incapable of longer holding out (and) agrees with Shivaji to deliver up (the fort of Bijapur and the person of Sikandar Adil Shah) to him for 6,00,000 *pagodas*' (Feb.1678). The resourcefulness of Siddi Masud, however, saved Bijapur for the time being.

The acquisition of Koppal in March 1679, had put 'the gate of the South' (Sabhasad) into the hands of the Marathas. Gadag had been conquered even earlier. Maratha dominion now extended over the Tungabhadra river into the Bellary and Chitaldurg districts. The local chieftains of Kanakgiri, Harpanhalli, Raidurg, etc. having been subdued that country was formed into a regular proviuce under Janardan Pant Hanumante. So weak was Bijapur all this time that, finally, even Masud had to acquiesce in Shivaji's Karnatak conquests in return for help received from him when

Bijapur was besieged by Dilir Khan (Aug. to Nov. 1679). But for Shivaji's timely and effective assistance, Bijapur might have fallen then, instead of seven years afterwards. The 'rebel' Shivaji thus proved a truer saviour of the Adilshahi than its imperial ally from the North.

Shivaji was certainly not in love with either Bjiapur or Golkonda; but he had clearly foreseen that the Mughals would prove more dangerous. As it transpired, the conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda by Aurangzeb (1686-7) brought the Mughals into closer proximity to the Marathas. The Muslim kingdoms could no longer be played off against one another. On the contrary Aurangzeb's prestige as their conqueror was considerably increased in the South. His resources as well as strategic advantages were also augmented. As successor to the Adil Shah and the Qutb Shah he could now legitimately claim hegemony over the Karnatak.

Shivaji's failure in taming the Siddi had fateful repercussions on the West Coast. It hardened the masters of Janjira on the one side, and emboldened the Portuguese, on the other. This was for Sambhaji a baffling inheritance. He could not be expected to succeed where his father had definitely failed. Yet the irrascible son of Shivaji was desperately determined to suppress the Siddi. So another heroic attempt was made to reduce Janjira (1680-82) before the Bhosle could feel convinced that his control must stop with the shore.

Though the Siddis were much disturbed by the quantities of shot and shell incessantly fired into their island-fortress by the Marathas, they stuck to the rock like the iguana. 'Sambhaji is resolved,' wrote the English on 19 January 1682, 'not to raise the siege so long as he hath a rag to his back,' He had drafted an army of 50,000 men, under Dadaji Deshpande, to build a causeway across the channel, 800 yards wide and 30 yards deep, to reach the island. 20,000 troops with a vast train of artillery were also despatched to bombard Janjira. When sheer force failed, stratagem was tried, but with equally futile results. A desperate attempt to effect a landing by sea 'had ill-success, for not above 500 escaped (out of 4,000), the rest being all killed by the Siddi and his men'.

The attitude of the English and the Portuguese towards Sambhaji was more helpful to the Siddi than to the Marathas. When Sambhaji invoked their assistance, the President and Council at Surat instructed Bombay: 'You must use all contrivances to keep fair with them; as we would by no means quarrel with Sambhaji Rajah, so upon no account can we with prudence fall out with the Siddi at present, it being a very unfit time.' As a matter of fact they were 'more afraid of the Mughal's displeasure than Sambhaji's (and) ordered the admittance of the Siddhi's fleet (in Bombay waters).'

This kind of complicity enraged Sambhaji against both the English and the Siddis, but he had not the power to punish them. His fleet was twice beaten by the Siddis—1. in August 1681 at Underi, and 2. in October the same year at Bombay. In the latter action Siddi Misri, the Muslim Captain of the Maratha fleet, was mortally wounded and died in Bombay. An attempt to punish the English by setting the Arabs against them ended in a disaster to the latter. Before this trouble was over, Sambhaji had to face the Portuguese, and the Siddis consolidated their position.

After Sambhaji's death (1689), Siddi Khairiyat Khan captured several of the Maratha strongholds in the Konkan, like Tale, Ghosale, Raigad, etc. Between 1696 and 1706 Siddi Qasim ruled over Janjira as his brother Khairiyat's successor under the title of Yaqut Khan. He fortified and garrisoned all the places conquered by his predecessor, as well as looted and devastated the Maratha districts in the neighbourhood. All this was winked at or encouraged by Aurangzeb. Siddi Yaqut died in 1706. But the Marathas, being engrossed in their life and death struggle against the Mughals, could hardly attend to the Siddi. Not until a Shivaji of the Seas arose in Kanhoji Angre could anything be done with their rivals.

Turning to the Portuguese, we might characterize Maratha relations with them at the close of Shivaji's life as 'peaceful but not friendly'. Under Sambhaji the position deteriorated. Prof. Pissurlencar has deplored the imprudence of Sambhaji in this result and tried to show how friendly the Portuguese always were towards the Marathas. But we have seen enough

of their dealings, in the last chapter, to accept this criticism. With the Siddis still on his hands, Sambhaji could ill-afford to antagonize either the English or the Portuguese. Pissurlencar has himself admitted that, to begin with, Sambhaji had begun well with the Portuguese. Without overlooking the faults of Sambhaji, it is equally necessary to examine the conduct (1682-84) of the new Portuguese Viceroy, Francisco de Tavora Conde de Alvor.

Aurangzeb was very anxious to win over the Portuguese to his side in order to open a second front against the Marathas from the sea-side. Manucci was at that time in Goa. 'When Aurangzeb's letter reached the Viceroy,' he writes, 'he had me sent for to translate it into Portuguese. On hearing the proposals I gave him advice as to what he should do. For this war could not be of any benefit to the Portuguese, seeing that the Mughal would never be content to leave the Portuguese to themselves after he had destroyed Sambhaji. In spite of this the Viceroy engaged in the war against that prince, and thereby all but lost Goa.'

Conde de Alvor, rather than Sambhaji, it appears to us, was responsible for the breach of friendship between the Portuguese and the Marathas. Sambhaji wanted to fortify Anjidiv, an island to the south of Karwar, as a naval base (like Khanderi) to counterpoise Janjira; but the Portuguese forestalled him by planting their flag there in April 1682. When Sambhaji protested against this as an unfriendly act, the Viceroy simply declared that he was his own master in his own territories. To make matters worse, he wrote to his Captain of the North (Don Manoel Lobo de Silveira) and the governors of Chaul, Bassein and Daman, asking them to allow free passage to the Mughal troops marching against Sambhaji. These were intolerable acts of unfriendliness in the eyes of Sambhaji. The make-believe of a congratulatory letter (28 July 1682) over the birth of Shahu, written by de Alvor, could ill-conceal the real attitude of the Portuguese Viceroy. Sambhaji, in his sober moments, was too realistic a man to be deceived by such political gestures. He, therefore, made up his mind that it was necessary to foil Aurangzeb's designs by the conquest of Goa. War thus became inevitable.

Shah Mahomed, Mughal envoy carrying Aurangzeb's letter to the Viceroy (dated June 1682), was in Goa on 20 January 1683. He left the place in April following. But hostilities between the Portuguese and the Marathas had already begun. In December 1682 Mughal vessels carrying provisions to Ranmast Khan, who was ravaging Maratha territory near Kalyan, had been allowed by the Portuguese to pass through Thana. Sambhaji started his reprisals on 5 April 1683,—surprising patience considering his irrascible temper! He looted and destroyed Tarapur and other towns from Bassein to Daman. The Portuguese retaliated by capturing Maratha vessels and imprisoning (16 May) their ambassador (Essaji Gambhir Rao ?) in Goa. The major actions of this war were fought at Chaul, Phonda (Fondem) and Estevo near Goa.

Sir Jadunath Sarkar has tripped at many points connected with this struggle, both as regards dates and places. His account is both inaccurate and misleading. The Portuguese case does not at all bear extenuation or defence as Sarkar has attempted to do. Conde de Alvor *never* 'planned to make a diversion' for the Maratha: he only fell a victim to Sambhaji's ruse Sambhaji, as Manucci has unequivocally stated, sent to the Viceroy tutored spies who told him that in the fortress of Phonda there were great treasures. 'His object was to get the Viceroy to leave Goa with a large force for the conquest of that fortress. Then he meant to cut off the Portuguese retreat and prevent their return, in this way making himself master of Goa.'

Manucci learnt of this design through the French at Rajapur. The warning was conveyed to the Portuguese Viceroy : 'I told His Excellency, but he would not heed my words. He issued forth with eight hundred white soldiers and eight thousand Canarese. He crossed with them to the other side of the river and began his campaign. With him went five pieces of heavy artillery'. Far from being unopposed. as Sarkar has said, the Viceroy had a very hot reception at the hands of the Marathas: 'They attacked with great fury the Viceroy's army, and gave him as much to do as he could manage. His best troops were killed, and, if he had not used wooden obstructions with which to impede the onset of the cavalry he would never have been able to get back to Goa,

nor could he have made any defence. The rainy weather impeded the discharge of his matchlocks; thus, coming on still closer, a trooper among the Rajputs dealt His Excellency a sword blow on the ribs. Retreating slowly, he reached the river-bank with great difficulty, and once more entered Goa. *He recognised, although too late, that he had been misled.*'

This disastrous and disgraceful rout has been characterized by Sarkar as a retirement 'bravely and skillully conducted by the Viceroy in person!' All the field-pieces and ammunition are declared to have been brought away, and 'the Portuguese had only a small skrimish which cost about 100 men on each side'. Yet Manucci, who was in Goa at the time, noted that 'great grief was caused in the city from the fruit, less loss of so many lives'. Well might this have been so mourned over, for the Portuguese as well as their native troops 'threw down their muskets and fled.....but in vain for the blacks rode over them, trampling most of our men. All our men fled in utter disorder, each one trying to save himself.....Nearly a whole company of seamen were killed, the dead and wounded amounting to two hundred'.

The Marathas next seized the island of Santo Estevo (Jua, 2 ms. N. E. of Goa). There was great consternation in Goa and on the following day (15 Nov. 1683) the Viceroy 'against the judgement of Dom Rodrigo da Costa, wished to reoccupy the place..... He selected some 150 soldiers shouting in a loud voice that any one who meant should follow him. He went as far as the castle walls and marched round them, during which Sambhaji's troops slew a great many. Some reinforcements arrived, and by good luck the Viceroy and Dom Rodrigo were able to reach their boats and take to flight,otherwise they would certainly have been killed like the rest.....Sambhaji's soldiers retained the island and were very near to Goa. They gave so much trouble to the city that *the Viceroy resolved to send an embassy to that prince to see if he could obtain a peace*, and I was obliged to go a second time to Sambhaji..... But the fighting still went on with great energy. *Well was it for the Portuguese that Sambhaji never knew exactly how few men there were in the island. If he had known, he could have carried out his scheme* (of occupying Goa) *in its entirety*.'

The old tragedy was once more enacted: The Viceroy was himself wounded by a bullet in the arm; more than 150 men were killed; the rest either fled or got stuck in the mud never to escape alive. The Marathas left the island on 16 November 1683, but continued to ravage the country round about. Sambhaji quitted Goa in December.

In the northern theatre of war, too, the fight was inconclusive. The siege of Chaul (Aug. 1683) cost the Marathas dear. On 22 December they occupied the island of Karinja (10 ms. S. E. of Bombay), It was, however, retaken by the Portuguese in September. The two parties continued to 'snarl and snap at each other' for sometime afterwards.

Early in 1684 a truce was patched up between the Portuguese Viceroy and Sambhaji by which, among other things, it was settled that 'when Sambhaji on his part will have given over in the north all lands and fortresses, with all the artillery and arms which he had taken from us, and returned all the prisoners, then the same kind of restitution will be made to him of all his men who are now in our hands, and the *gao candil* (?) of Bassein will be paid and the *chouts* of Daman, Sambhaji Raje being obliged to defend those territories as he has promised.' However on 24 January 1686 we find the Portuguese reporting to Lisbon that 'As Sambhaji did not keep the terms of peace it became necessary to continue the war with him.'

Whatsoever the cause of continued or fresh hostilities, the Portuguese secretly incited the Desais of Concao (Konkan) to rebel against Sambhaji. Consequently, Khem Savant, with Portuguese assistance, roamed over places belonging to the Marathas, burning and robbing, north of Goa (Feb. 1685). The Dalvis of Phonda did the same to the south of Goa, always finding safe refuge in Portuguese territory. The Portuguese treaty with these chieftains (8 Feb. 1685) makes interesting reading. It was signed by 'Rama Dalvy Bounsullo and Deva Saunto Bounsullo, servants of Quema Saunto Sardesai of Curallo, and two others.' Its terms were: That they should capture the lands from Banda to Ancolla, and, dividing them into three parts, they should give two to the Portuguese; that the one who takes the lands from Cuddale to Chaul would be helped by a Portuguese fleet, to cow down

opposition all along the coast, with their own crew, arms and ammunition, in return for which they were to receive a third of the lands, etc., taken. Besides the fleet, they would be supplied with gunpowder and bullets, 'as much as could be spared,' without paying in kind or money. The Viceroy also undertook to write to the King Mogor asking him to take the chiefs into his service, and to this end he would send his own men to accompany them to the Mogor. Finally, if they came out victorious, the Portuguese would grant them the same liberty as they enjoyed under the Moors and under Sambhaji, to live in those territories according to their rites, having their own temples and other things; but they should not make peace with Sambhaji, as the Portuguese too would not; nor do harm to the factories of the English, the French and the Dutch in Sambhaji's territories. The Portuguese agreed to lend them money on these terms and on their giving hostages, but *only to the extent they could*, and *after starting the war*.

The stipulation against harming the English and other Europeans, in the above treaty, throws an instructive sidelight on the attitude of the foreigners. Despite their mutual rivalries and national antipathies (which often resulted in armed antagonisms), *per contra* the heathen natives, they felt like safeguarding their European and Christian interests. The *Italian* Manucci obtains secret information about Sambhaji's military movements from the *French* at Rajapur, and warns the *Portuguese*, as we have before noticed. The Portuguese stipulation regarding the English is all the more interesting in the light of the English attitude about them. On 30 Nov, 1683 Sir John Child wrote to Sir Josia Child:'Bombay labours under abundance of troubles from the Siddi and *our very naughty neighbours the Portuguese.* They have lately forbid all provisions going to our island and afford it all the injury they can. They are at war now with Sambhaji Raja.' Again, on 7 April 1684, we find the Company's Directors asking Surat to vindicate the honour of their nation against *the insolence of the Portuguese* as well as the Moors: But 'in the face of impending struggle peradventure it may be prudent to temporize with the Moghul and Sambhaji until we have righted ourselves with other two and until you have made

Bombay so formidable that the appearance of it may fright the Moghul's government and Sambhaji Raja.'

Bombay was to be made 'as strong as money and art 'could make it'. Sir John Child, President of Surat Council, was styled 'Captain General and Admiral of all forces by sea and in the northern parts of India, from Cape Comorin to to the Gulf of Persia.' In October 1685 Surat was informed that the Directors had decided upon firm action both against 'the Moors and the impudence of the interlopers', for which it was necessary to 'enter into a close confederacy and friendship with Sambhaji Raia and *maintain always a strict friendship with him*'. In 1687 Child moved to Bombay, together with his Council, from Surat and made it the seat of the Company's Government. Sambhaji was losing against the Mughals, but the English felt that Bombay was safer than Surat.

However, the negotiations with Sambhaji proved fruitless as he was not in a position to assist the English, nor were the English anxious to help Sambhaji. After the final catastrophe of Sambhaji, we find Child writing to the Directors in England on 12 Dec. 1689: 'At present there is no certain news where Raja Ram is; but on this part of India he does not appear, nor any force of his in the field to withstand the Moghul and his forces. Rairee... and most of his strongholds are fallen into the Moghul's hands .... All the country about us that was the Raja's is the Moghul's now; there only stands out for the Raja near us the little island Kenery,.... and another castle on the mainland called Padangarh to the southward of Chaul.... They have been with us for assistance and would feign borrow money, etc. We have given them all good words, may be, and keep them engaged what we can for the present, but in all appearance they will not hold out long and should we trust them, they will certainly deceive us'.

The sad state of Maharashtra alluded to in the above reference constituted the major crisis of her history since the death of Shivaji in 1680. The last days of that great monarch had indeed been clouded by anxieties such as Akbar had felt on his death-bed. Sambhaji's character and conduct were somewhat analogous to Selim's in several respects: Both were inheritors of a glory and responsibilities which

their characters could ill-sustain; both were in revolt against their fathers who were forced to keep them under duress on account of grave misdemeanour; both alike were a prey to overpowering passions which neutralized virtues that might otherwise have enabled them to improve upon their heritage; both were looked upon by their fathers with grave apprehensions about the wisdom of their succassion; both had junior rivals whose eligibility was considered more suitable; both allowed authority to slip out of their own hands into those of their favourites, though of very different characters and consequently with very different results. There is no comparison between the noble Nur Jahan and the criminal Kavi Kalas or Kalasha; the former proved the saviour of Jahangir, while the latter was the ruiner of Sambhaji. Both, however, possessed accomplishments through which they could master their masters and hold them in a *vice*. The only redeeming feature of the two reigns was that there were very able State-officials who served their sovereigns out of regard for their great predecessors and a deep sense of personal responsibility. The tragedy of Sambhaji is without a parallel in history: a tragedy of high spirits self-poisoned, of courage without character and scholarship without sagacity, unfortunately fortunate to have been the son and successor of Shivaji, whose incontinence and fitful cruelties eclipsed an otherwise loveable personality.

What perturbed Shivaji more than any moral blemish of Sambhaji was his defection to the Mughalcamp on 13 December 1678.* That unfilial, unpatriotic, indiscreet delinquency seemed to jeopardize all the great and good work that Shivaji had done during nearly half-a-century of his strenuous life. Was all that he had so arduously achieved to be undone by his own son? But the destinies of Maharashtra were not to miscarry even under such a misfortune. Still, it terribly upset the anxious father. Sambhaji had not merely deserted to the enemy but also attacked Bhupalgad which was in the keeping of the veteran Firangji Narsala (the valiant hero of Chakan). Overwhelmed by conflicting sentiments (human though unsoldierly) the old warrior behaved like Tardi Beg

* See D. V. Kale, *op. cit.*, for elucidation.

Khan at Delhi on the eve of Akbar's entry into India, and met with the same fate. His error of judgment in yielding the fortress to the rebellious son of his master earned for him the extreme penalty of a delinquent soldier.

Sambhaji, however, returned to his father in December next (1679) and was kept in confinement in Panhala. Shivaji died at Raigad on 4 April 1680. Plans to supersede Sambhaji only provoked him, when he regained freedom and authority, into acts of insensate cruelty. Soyarabai (Rajaram's mother) was inhumanly put to death, Annaji Datto and several other important officers of State were barbarously executed, and the Shirkes were equally ruthlessly exterminated. Rajaram, Sambhaji's step-brother, hardly ten years of age, had been raised to the throne as a puppet only to be thrown into prison for no fault of his own.

The accession of Sambhaji, on 20 July 1680, in the midst of the turmoil which followed the death of Shivaji, seemed to afford Aurangzeb the opportunity of his life. The flight of Prince Akbar (Aurangzeb's rebellious son) into Maharashtra, on 1 June 1681, lured him into the Deccan which was destined to be his grave. Things had not been moving satisfactorily there for quite a long time. Shah Alam had been replaced by Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur Khan as Viceroy in May 1680. The old general laid siege to Ahivant in July 1680, but the defenders made good resistance. As soon as the rains ceased, Sambhaji opened his campaign in Khandesh. Burhanpur and Dharampur were sacked in January 1681. No resistance was offered, much harm was done, and the people threatened 'civil disobedience' if better protection was not afforded them by the imperial officers. So the Emperor hastened south and arrived at Aurangabad on 22 March 1682.

'As soon as the peace negotiations with the Rana (of Mewar) were completed,' writes Manucci, 'Aurangzeb left Ajmer, early in September of the year 1681. His object was now a war with Sambhaji, all unmindful of his fate—namely, that this departure was for ever; that there would be no return for him either to Agra or to Delhi; for it is now (in 1700) nineteen years that he has been in camp without effecting any thing against that rebellious people, the Mahrattas. God only knows what will come to pass in the end! For the reports

continually brought in to me are that he is in a very bad way, closely pressed by the aforesaid Mahrattas. Thus until this day he has not been able to accomplish the enterprise he intended (as he said) to finish in two years. He marched carrying with him three sons, Shah Alam, Azam Tara, and Kam Bakhsh, also his grandsons. He had with him much treasure which came to an end so thoroughly during this war that he was compelled to open the treasure-houses of Akbar, Nur Jahan, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan. Besides this finding himself with very little cash, owing to the immense expenditure forced upon him, and because the revenue-payers did not pay with the usual promptitude, he was obliged at Aurangabad to melt down all his household silver ware. In addition to all this, he wanted to empty the great store-houses filled with goods left by deceased persons or with property collected in Akbar's, Jahangir's and Shah Jahan's time from the men, great and small, who had been servants of the State. But afterwards he ordered these store-houses not to be opened, for he rightly feared that, he being absent, the officials would embezzle more than half.'

While a Mughal fleet was cruising along the Konkan coast in order to intercept Prince Akbar, to prey upon Maratha vessels, and to divert Sambhaji's attention generally, a Mughal army of 14,000 horse under Hassan Ali Khan, descended upon Kalyan from Junnar, burning and destroying villages *enroute.* Prince Azam and Dilir Khan were sent towards Ahmednagar, while another division was despatched to Nasik, under Shihab-ud-Din Khan and Dalpat Rai. But the siege of Ramsej (7 ms. N. of Nasik), despite reinforcements sent under Khan-i-Jahan himself, very soon revealed to Aurangzeb the might and resourcefulness of the Marathas. 'If we may believe Khafi Khan, who was present at the siege,' writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, 'the fort had no iron cannon, but the garrison hollowed out trunks of trees and fired leather missiles from them which did the work of ten pieces of artillery.'

Aurangzeb's spirit was roused by this incident and he decided upon extensive operations. Meanwhile the siege of Ramsej dragged on and Khan-i-Jahan had to withdraw petulantly burning down the wooden tower constructed by him at great cost. 'The exultant Marathas crowded over the walls,

beating their drums for joy and taunting the retreating Mughals in the foulest language.' Likewise the imperialists felt obliged to decamp from Kalyan destroying its fortifications. Sambhaji attacked them from the rear, killing many and capturing a large number of horses. 'Thus we see,' observes Sarkar, 'that for more than a year after his arrival at Aurangabad, from November 1681 to April 1683, the Emperor accomplished nothing notable in spite of his immense resources.' The Surat factors wrote on 3 April 1682 that Aurangzeb 'hath with him a great army with which he sits still and attempts nothing, being under great jealousy and fears, thinks himself hardly secure'. He was 'continually wavering' being 'extraordinarily peevish and uneasy'. To avoid the Emperor's wrath, it was suspected, Dilir Khan poisoned himself.

In the Konkan, Shah Alam had crossed the Ramghat pass (26 ms. W. of Belgaum and 30 ms. N. E. of Goa) and entered Savantwadi. Hasan Ali Khan guarded his lines of communication over the Ghats with 5,000 men. It was on account of this move that Sambhaji had withdrawn suddenly from Goa after Estevao (Dec. 1683). Yet, Shah Alam demanded from the Portuguese a large fee for having rescued them from Sambhaji! When they demurred, he plotted to seize Goa by treachery and ravaged the surrounding country when he was baulked of his prey. This, says Sarkar, was 'the worst mistake the Prince could have committed, because ultimately it meant the annihilation of his army through famine'.

The historic disaster of the worse than Zenophon retreat (more like Napoleon's from Moscow) of Shah Alam's army has been graphically described by Manucci who was an eye witness. They were retreating over the Ramghat pass a league and a half of ascent. Here Sambhaji might have killed the whole of us, for it was a place difficult to climb, with narrow paths passing through jungle and thorny scrub. But he did not choose to attempt it, and they said he was acting in collusion with Shah Alam. But what Sambhaji did not do by attacking us, God carried out by the pestilence which raged in the army with such violence that in seven days of its prevalence everyone died who was attacked—that is about one-third of the army. Of this disease there died every day

five hundred men ; nor was the mortality confined to men only—it extended to horses, elephants and camels. This made the air pestilential, and it being a confined route, supplies also failed, and this was like encountering another enemy. For although, as I said, wheat was abundant, from this time there were no animals to carry it. Thus the soldiers had more than enough to undergo. Many of those whose horses died had no money to buy others, nor was there anyone in the camp ready to sell. They were thus forced to march on foot, and many died of the great heat and thirst they underwent.' The miserable remnants of Shah Alam's army reached Ahmednagar on 18 May 1684, having accomplished nothing beyond burning and plundering a portion of the Konkan.'He hath taken no stronghold,' observed the English, 'but ruins the country, lays all waste, and burns all towns he comes near.'

Aurangzeb then concentrated on the conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda which he accomplished in 1686 and 1687 respectively. Sambhaji sent some succour to the beleaguered cities but could do little more. Aurangzeb also accused the the Qutb Shah of having sent a *lakh* of *pagodas* to ' the wicked Sambha'. When the two Sultanates were destroyed and their armies disbanded Sambhaji found employment for most of them. 'God made use of this very expedient of Aurangzeb,' writes Manucci, 'to counteract his projects. In disbanding the soldiers of those other kingdoms, he imagined he was making his future enterprises a certainty. But Sambhaji was thereby only rendered the more powerful; for although he had no sufficient resources to entertain so many men, he welcomed all who resorted to him and in place of pay allowed them to plunder wherever they pleased.' All the same, flushed with his recent triumphs over Bijapur and Golkonda, Aurangzeb vowed that he would not return to the north 'until he had seen Sambhaji's bleeding head weltering at his feet'.

One of the windfalls of the Mughal offensive at a very critical stage was the death of Hambirrao Mohite, Shivaji's great generalissimo (Dec. 1687). The Mughal general Sarja Khan indeed met with at Wai 'the fate that had befallen Afzal Khan, but it was a pyrrhic victory for the Marathas. Hambirrao drew the enemy into a death-trap in the Maha-

baleshvar Hill–as the Shirkes had done with Malik-u't-Tujjar —and slaughtered them. 'The warworn cavalry leader,' writes Kincaid, 'added to skilful generalship an intimate knowledge of the Deccan and Konkan hills. On the battle-field the sound of the veteran's voice was worth fifty squadrons. In the council chamber he alone ventured to beard the infamous Kalasha or recall to his master a fitting sense of his exalted duties. Had Hambirrao lived, it is possible that with his hold firmly established on Jinji and with the resources of much of southern India at his command, Sambhaji would have repelled the Mughal offensive. But on Hambirrao Mohite's death Kalasha became all powerful and Sambhaji became more and more a slave to profligacy and intemperance, and the effects of the King's vice and sloth were soon visible in the disasters of his armies.'

The sins of omission and commission were indeed beginning to bear fruit for Sambhaji. When Balaji Avji, his son Avji Ballal and brother Shamji were trampled under the feet of elephants, Yesu Bai, Sambhaji's queen, is stated (by Chitnis) to have declared to her erring husband: 'You have not acted properly in killing Balaji Prabhu; he was a venerable and trustworthy servant. Shivaji used to confide his secrets to him and say— "Chitnis is the very life of the kingdom and myself." On oath he had pledged that office to Balaji and his family. You have killed and alienated so many; the few remaining also you have treated so unfairly. What will become of our kingdom?' Ramdas had likewise admonished the Prince advising him to avoid excesses and to act always in the memory of his noble father. Raghunath Pant Hanumante (whom Sambhaji had displaced by his brother-in-law Hirji Mahadik, as viceroy of the Karnatak) equally candidly asked: 'Why is the kingdom shrinking daily? Why is the Siddi still unsubdued? Why are Brahmans being beheaded instead of being imprisoned? Why are the enemies sought to be won over instead of executed? Why is the administration in Kalusha's hands instead of the King's?' The one and only answer was that Sambhaji had gone too far down the primrose path to be redeemed.

Writers have blamed Kavi Kalasha for this. Khwafi Khan describes Sambhaji's boon companion as 'a filthy dog'. He

also observes that 'unlike his father, Sambhaji was addicted to wine, and fond of the society of handsome women, and gave himself up to the pleasure ... pleasures which bring so many men of might to their ruin.' Both Sambhaji and Kabji were 'entirely unaware of the approach of the Falcon of Destiny,' as they were regaling themselves with the gifts of Bacchus and Venus, at Sangameshvar (22 ms. N. E. of Ratnagiri) on the Ghats. This was none other than Muqarrab Khan, Aurangzeb's emissary, who with 3,000 picked men came from Kolhapur 'with the speed of lightning' and pounced upon his prey on 1 February 1689. Two weeks later the unfortunate prisoners were presented to the Emperor in his camp at Bahadurgad. A verdict of death was pronounced by the doctors of law for having 'slain, captured, and dishonoured Muslims, and plundered the cities of Islam'. The captives then became legitimate targets of humiliation, ridicule and torture (at which the Inquisitors of Europe might have blushed) at the hands of the true believers. Finally, on 11 March 1689, the infidels were put through a most barbarous execution at Koregam on the Bhima (12 ms. N. E. of Poona). The place was renamed Fatehabad.

Martin alleges that 'some of the leading Brahmans',disgusted with Sambhaji's misconduct, conceived 'the design of destroying him'. They informed some Imperial officers and got troops placed in ambush 'at a place which was convenient for their purpose'. Then luring Sambhaji into 'the diversion of hunting, caused him to be led into the trap where the Mughals enveloped him. His head was by order of the Emperor carried to various provinces and publicly exposed in many cities'.

'It has been said', writes Manucci, 'that custom becomes nature; and a man accustomed to any vice cannot, even when he would, free himself from the tendency that by repeated acts he has contracted. Thus was it with Sambhaji. Habituated to interfering with other men's wives, now when it had become necessary to act the hero, he could not rid himself of his perverse inclinations. This was the cause of his losing liberty and life. Kab Kalish availed himself of this evil propensity to deliver him into the hands of Aurangzeb.' The traitor was the first to be punished, 'so that he

might be unable to state that this great treason had been plotted at Aurangzeb's instigation.' Then Sambhaji was painfully paraded on a camel with the cap and bells of a clown, and when the humiliating and painful perambulation was completed, Aurangzeb 'ordered his side to be cloven open with an axe and his heart to be extracted'. The body was thrown to the dogs.

Vain hatred ! Maharashtra could not be crushed that way. The murder of Sambhaji sent a thrillof horror through every Maratha heart and made his hair stand on end. The reaction revealed that every such hair was also turned into a spike; for Aurangzeb had unwittingly sown the dragon's teeth. 'It seemed as if the death of Sambhaji,' Manucci observes, 'was bound to secure Aurangzeb's lordship over all the lands of Hindustan down to the sea. But the commanders of valorous Shivaji, father of this unfortunate man, were by this time practised in fighting the Mughals, and expert in the way of dealing with those foreigners who deserted from his side. They determined to continue the campaign and uphold the cause of Ram Raja, younger brother of the deceased. Therefore they took him out of the prison and made him their prince..... Thus in 1689 the war recommenced with great fury. It was not enough for Aurangzeb to have made himself master of Bijapur and of Gulkandah; he must needs oppress a little prince who yet was strong enough to compel so potent a king to remain away from his kingdom (i. e. Hindustan) and dwell in camp merely to prevent the loss of his previous conquests.'

The period of eighteen years, from 1689 to 1707, was one of utmost trial for the Marathas. Their race had produced not only a Shivaji, but also a Sambhaji. How could the future of such a people be confidently predicted ? Rajaram was still in his teens and was not a man of genius; certainly not a leader of the qualities of his father, nor had he the drive or flare of Sambhaji. Shahu, son of Sambhaji, was a lad of seven summers. Leadership that the situation demanded was not to be found within the royal family. This was indeed th e crest of the crisis, but the nation produced other men of drive and decision, of courage and character, of brawn as well as brain. That is why, despite the resources and deter-

mination of Aurangzeb, the country was saved. ' As men of faith, indeed, as the *Amatya* put it, ' all his efforts proved futile *by the grace of God.* ' Yet is it equally true that Providence was acting through men like the *Amatya* himself : 'This object, just as it was conceived in the mind of His Majesty, was carried out on account of God's extreme kindness and your efforts'.

The saviours of the legacy of Shivaji and the heritage of Maharastra at this time— to name only the most prominent —were 1. Ramchandrapant Bavdekar *Amatya*, 2. Shankraji Narayan, 3. Parshuram Trimbak, 4. Santaji Ghorpade, 5. Dhanaji Jadhav, 6. Khando Ballal *Chitnis*, and 7. Pralhad Niraji. They were the seven sages (*saptarshi*), the BRAIN TRUST of Maharashtra whose courage, wisdom, resourcefulness perseverance, patriotism, presence of mind, loyalty, selflessness and devotion to duty saved Maharashtra. But it is not to be forgotten at the same time that these great qualities were 'in the widest commonalty spread ', without which little could have been achieved by leadership alone. The innumerable heroes and heroines of Maharashtra in those dark days of sore strain—despite the blacksheep among them bore themselves up with courage and patience. It was their ' blood, sweat, tears and toil ' not less than statesmanship of the *Amatya* and the valiant generalship of Dhanaji and Santaji that made history for Maharashtra. While ' His Majesty'—Rajaram—supplied the sentimental and traditional tie, the wisdom and valour of these Pillars of State overcame all obstacles *'by the grace of God.'* Faith, indeed, is life-giving. This faith, which moves mountains, was the 'cumulative index ' of the work done in Maharashtra by saints like Dnaneshwar, Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas, as well as by all the Pioneers—as political sappers and miners—which preceded the great nation-builder Shivaji.

Rajaram does not appear to have undergone a formal coronation. In his letter to the *Pant Sachiv* Shankraji (25 Aug. 1697) he says : 'God will bring back Shahu surely in course of time ; he is the true master of the kingdom. All that I am doing is for his sake only. Ultimately all people have to look up to him : it is God's will.' Yet the proclamation of Rajaram as King proved a wise step. For on 19 October 1689

when Raigad was captured by Zulfiqar Khan, Shahu and other members of the royal family were taken prisoners. Rajaram by his escape to Pratapgad (5 April), thence to Panhala, and finally to Ginji, which he reached on 15th Nov. 1689, had saved the monarchy. The 'flight' was as cleverly planned and as romantically executed as Shivaji's escape from Agra. It was part of the strategy which the Maratha alone had the genius to carry out.

Rajaram remained in Ginji for eight long years, until November 1697. The Mughals besieged that historic stronghold from September 1690 to 8 January 1698, though they were not seriously at it all that time. Still the presence of Rajaram there, most of the period, served to tie up vast forces and supplies in the south, which the imperialists could ill spare from Maharashtra proper. Had Aurangzeb been able to concentrate all his attention and resources on his central target during this vital stage of his war, the result might have been fatal to tke Maratha cause. Nor was Ginji captured finally along with Rajaram: the bird had flown before the nest was taken.

Fort St. George had noted on 14 Nov. 1689 : Rajaram's 'designe of comeing hither being reported to divert the Mugull's army from thence and joine with severall Gentue Naigues and raise a considerable army to retake Gulcondah and Vizapore Kingdoms, wch. there is a great probability of, both places being at present very weakly guarded.' It is interesting to note that the *Adnapatra* also states : 'After achieving so much success by favour of God, Rajaram divulged his inmost object of conquering the country occupied by the Yavanas, of destroying the Yavana conspiracy, and of beating down the Yavana predominance which had taken root in the east, west and south, by sending large armies.'

There is confirmation of these objectives as well in the correspondence of the Maratha generals and officers. A letter of 22 March 1690, written by Khando Ballal *Chitnis* speaks of the rallying of the Poligars of the south in these terms : 'The news here is : Since Rajaram reached Karnatak 40,000 cavalry and 1,25,000 foot-soldiers have joined him ; more are coming. Hereditary Poligars of that province have all come over to him. It has become an impressive rally.'

Aurangzeb, all this time, was hovering between Bijapur and Brahmapuri (Islampur). Up to 1699 he tried out all his best generals in both the principal theatres of war, namely, Karnatak and Maharashtra. Thereafter (1699-1705), disgusted with their quarrels, corruptions, inefficiency, disloyalty, dishonesty and defeats,—particularly in Maharashtra—the Emperor desperately decided to direct the operations in person.

The result of this despairing adventure was that the imperial octagenerian suffered a physical break-down and felt constrained to retire to Ahmednagar, on 20 January 1706, where he died a year later. 'One by one the old, able and independent officers and courtiers of his earlier years,' writes Sarkar, 'had passed away, and he was now surrounded only by timid sychophants and upstart nobles of his own creation, who could never venture to contradict him in his errors nor give him honest counsel. The mutual jealousies of his generals—Nusrat Jang against Firuz Jang, Sujaet Khan against Md. Murad, Tarbiyat Khan against Fathullah Khan,—ruined his affairs completely as the French cause in the Peninsular War was ruined by the jealousies of Napoleon's marshals.'

When Rajaram reached Ginji he set up a Court there with all the paraphernalia of Maratha government. As noticed above, he also rallied all the local forces around himself. In January 1690, even the Mughal feudatories and officers (newly brought under them) like Yachappa Naik, 'Ismail and Md. Sadiq, rebelled against Aurangzeb and joined Rajaram. In April, the imperialists from Madras to Kunimedu were hopelessly outnumbered and defeated, and forced to flee to the European settlements on the coast. The situation was slightly improved when Zulfiqar Khan, the Mughal C.-in-C., arrived at Conjivaram in August and began the siege of Ginji the next month. For a time even Rajaram retired from Ginji; but he soon returned in February following: Zulfiqar was baffled by the mocking fortress while the Marathas recovering from their first shock, began to harass him incessantly. By April the deceptive superiority of the Mughals melted away and the Marathas played havoc with their camp supplies. Aurangzeb sent heavy reinforcements on 16 December 1691 under Zulfiqar's father Asad Khan (Imperial *Wazir*) and Prince Kam Bakhsh. Yet nothing

was achieved and the Mughal officers preyed upon the *zamindars* of the surrounding country. 'The rains fell with excessive severity. Grain was dear. The soldiers, having to spend days and nights together in the trenches, suffered great hardship; the entire tract looked like one lake.' To make matters worse, men of the garrison of Ginji sallied out and slaughtered the drenched Mughal soldiers. Bad as the Mughal position was during the rainy season, says Sarkar, it became absolutely untenable in the winter.

Early in December 1692, 30,000 Maratha cavalry arrived, led by renowned generals like Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav. Their first success was the capture of the Mughal *faujdar* of Conjivaram, Ali Mardan Khan, along with 1500 horse and six elephants. All the property and equipment of the Mughals was plundered. The Khan was, however, released for a ransom of one *lakh* of *hons*. Several nobles and imperial officers fled for refuge to Madras where they were succoured by the English. The victorious Marathas established their authority over Conjivaram and the Kadapa district.

At Ginji the besiegers were themselves besieged. So completely were they encircled that all communications with their base-camp were cut off. Aurangzeb's favourite son, Kam Bakhsh, himself opened secret negotiations with Rajaram. But he was arrested for his treason by the other generals and tumultuous scenes were enacted. 'The audacity of the infidels exceeded all bounds and death stared the Muslims in the face.' A desperate attempt was made by the imperialists to extricate themselves from the death-trap, but their ammunition was soon finished. However, timely reinforcements coming under Sarfaraz Khan and the heroism of Dalpat Rai Bundela, saved the Mughals with the skin of their teeth. They were then allowed to withdraw (23 January 1693) to Wandiwash, but not until the *Wazir* Asad Khan himself had made overtures to Rajaram to secure a pitiable truce.

The siege of Ginji was not renewed in earnest until November 1697. During the interlude between January 1693 and November 1697 the Mughals diverted themselves over the rest of Karnatak. They won over Yachappa Naik and Ismail Maka, subdued fortesses in the S. Arcot district, inva-

ded Tanjore and exacted tribute from Ekoji's son Shahji II. Towards the close of 1694 they turned to Ginji, but only to deceive the Emperor. Bhimsen writes: 'If he (Zulfiqar) had wished it he could have captured the fort on the very day he reached Jinji. But it is the practice of generals to prolong operations (for their own profit and ease).' Manucci too observes: 'The project did not suit Zulfiqar Khan's views. Success in it would have ended the war, and with it his own power.' Consequently, the offer of Yachappa Naik to take the fort within a short time was not merely turned down, but he was barbarously executed as a traitor. Sarfaraz Khan left the camp in utter disgust in April 1695, without even asking for Zulfiqar's permission. Vellore was invested in October, but it held out for many years, and was not taken until 14 August 1702. Meanwhile, the arrival of Santaji and Dhanaji created such panic that many took fright and prepared to decamp sending their families to Madras. Zulfiqar himself took shelter in Arcot (1696). The soldiers were kept in arrears of pay. He even threatened to levy blackmail from the English at Madras, as no money came from the Emperor. The siege of Ginji was resumed only when Santaji had been murdered by the agents of Dhanaji (June 1697) and Rajaram had left for Vishalgad. 'To preserve appearances', writes Wilkes, 'it was necessary to report frequent attacks and repulses. On the other side Daud Khan (Panni), second in command of the Mughal army, drank largely of the best European liquors, and when full of the god would perpetually volunteer the extirpation of the infidels. Zulfiqar necessarily assented to these enterprises, but always gave secret intelligence to the enemy of the time and place of attack; and the troops of Daud Khan were often repulsed with slaughter.'

Zulfiqar and his coadjutors in the Karnatak may not be singled out for such comment. Elsewhere in the Mughal army things were no better. In May 1690, when Rustam Khan was captured by the joint-action of Ramchandra Pant, Shankraji, Santaji and Dhanaji, near Satara, the tide appeared to be turning against Aurangzeb for the first time. It was a signal triumph for the Marathas. 1500 Mughals fell on the field and the Khan's family too was captured, together with

4,000 horses, 8 elephants and entire baggage of Rustam's camp. After sixteen days the Mughal general purchased his freedom for one *lakh* of *rupees*. The Marathas then captured in quick succession the fortresses of Pratapgad, Rohida, Rajgad and Torna in the course of the same year. Parashuram Pant took Panhala in 1692, but the Mughals, under Prince Muizuddin could not wrest it from him even after a close investment from 1692–94. Then Prince Bidar Bakht tried his skill at it until 1696, followed by Firuz Jang; but all in vain. From 1693-95 the Marathas, particularly under Santaji Ghorpade and Amritrao Nimbalkar, were actively harassing the Mughals while their generals were quarrelling among themselves. The period closed with the defeat and death of two first-rate imperial generals—Qasim Khan and Himmat Khan.

The former general had been sent against Santaji in November 1695. Finding that local *zamindars* like Barmappa Naik had made common cause with the Marathas, 'a very choice corps' was despatched to assist Qasim Khan, under Khanazad Khan and Murad Khan. But Santaji proved himself more than equal to this picked military talent of the Mughals. He entrapped the enemy in the citadel of Dodderi in the Chitaldurg district of Mysore. 'There the rump of the beaten army had gathered for refuge, and such was their panic that the very officers (Khan Azad Khan, Saf Shikand and Md. Murad) scrambled into safety before their men. The rank and file were left in the lurch to starve and die, for provisions were scarce. The transport animals are said to have eaten the thatch of neighbouring cottages: 'They even chewed one another's tails mistaking them for straw! The officers, once they sneaked into the safety of the stronghold shamelessly declared, "How gallantly have we brought ourselves here!" Qasim Khan drugged himself to death out of despair. The rest purchased their freedom at great cost. The terms of the capitulation were strictly observed by the Marathas, but not by the Mughals. With a rare sense of chivalry Santaji supplied bread and water to the famished and woe-begone imperialists and nursed them back into life. On the third day Khanazad Khan started for the Court with a Maratha escort.'

Within two months of this triumph, on 20 January 1696, Santaji scored another great victory over Himmat Khan, at Basavapattan. Here the general sent for the rescue of Qasim Khan was killed in action, and his troops were caught in the citadel as at Dodderi. Finally, Hamid-ud-din Khan followed with an army of 12,000 and retrieved the situation. 'That is how a soldier fights !' declared Aurangzeb, praising Hamid. Bidar Bakht was sent to punish the rebellious *zamindars* of Mysore, while Santaji was away at Ginji (end of January 1696).

Passing over the desultory fighting which continued in several places, and the murder of Santaji Ghorpade in June 1697 (which we shall comment upon later), we must here refer to an abortive peace offer made in September 1698. It is not unlikely that Rajaram, who lacked the iron will of his father and brother in relation to the Mughals, and depressed over the tragic loss of the great general Santaji might have desired a respite. But soon better counsels prevailed and a more vigorous policy was adopted. Early in 1699 Rajaram made a tour of inspection over Konkan visiting all the forts. In June he returned to Satara which he contemplated making his capital. In September he planned an extensive campaign into Khandesh and Berar. In October he was actually out on what unfortunately proved his last expedition. Broken in health he returned to Simhagad within a few months and died there on 2 March 1700. He was but thirty years of age then. 'At that time,' writes Chitnis, 'he called together the *Amatya* and other ministers and declared: 'Ever since the time of the Great King (Shivaji) you have been exerting yourselves in the cause of the Kingdom. My end is near. Hereafter you should all join together and continue the work as at present. You should not slacken your efforts to secure the return of Shahu, when I am no more. You will win if you concentrate on that objective, — you know it well. What more shall I add ?' So saying, he commended Ramchandra Pant and the rest to one another. Commanding all to act in obedience to the great *Amatya*, with a prayerful heart, he went to his eternal rest.

This illuminating record clearly reflects the soul of the dying Prince: conscious of his own limitations, he sincerely

desired the return of Shahu; while appreciative of the devotion of his ministers, he was apprehensive of the divisions among them. The blood-feud between Dhanaji and Santaji, with its tragic result, was a portentous warning. Personally too weak in mind and body to give a vigorous lead to his compatriots, he undoubtedly showed the greatest sagacity in entrusting tasks which were obviously beyond his own capacity to hands that were more capable and brains that were more resourceful like those of the *Amatya* and his coadjutors. By his last act of commendation, leaving the kingdom in the safe hands of Ramchandra Pant *Amatya Hukmatpanah* Rajaram redeemed at one stroke all his faults of omission and commission. Historians have failed to appreciate the character of this amiable Prince. He might have been weak, but he was shrewd, sincere, patriotic, well-meaning and inclined to be magnanimous. His death undoubtedly deepened the crisis of his country, though his survivors had both the courage and power to tide over it.

To follow the summary of the situation given by Chitnis : 'Here Parashuram Pant, Shankraji Pant, and *Hukmat-Panah* recovered the forts of Panhala, Satara etc. Konkan had been assigned by Sambhaji to Sidoji Gujar, and Kanhoji Angre was under him. Considering Sidoji wise, brave, and virile, he was taken to Ginji; and Angre was placed in charge of Suvarn-durg. With great vigilance he guarded that Province and its strongholds... When Rajaram returned, he was made *Sarkhel* on account of his meritorious services. Ramchandra, Pant, by his great valour, had protected the kingdom during Rajaram's absence; therefore he was invested with all authority, and he continued to guide the destinies of the State. Shankraji who was *Sachiv* until 1690 was given the title of Rajadna and put in charge of the territory covered by Raigad. The *Amatya* personally looked after the region between Karhad and Gokarna. The army was commanded by Ramchandra Pant and Shankraji with Santaji and Dhanaji under them. Parashuram Pant, the captor of Panhala, also conquered the lands and forts between Miraj and Rangna. He earned the titles of *Suba-lashkar* and *Samser-jang*, and in course of time became *Pratinidhi* and *Amatya*. He combined in himself the civil qualities of Ramchandra Pant and the military

qualities of Shankraji, and earned the utmost confidence of Tarabai after the death of Rajaram. Pralhad Niraji and Khando Ballal were equally serviceable to Rajaram while he was at Ginji.

Santaji Ghorpade belonged to the Kapsi branch of the Bhosla family. He was pre-eminently a soldier, but too impetuous almost ungovernable and imperious. This character brought him into conflict with Dhanaji Jadhav, which soon appeared to revive the ancient family feud of Bhosla vs. Jadhav. Had Rajaram the tact or force of personality, he might have composed their differences; but he seemed to favour Dhanaji. Consequently the quarrel culminated in the cowardly crime of murdering Santaji while he was bathing in a sequestered stream in a corner of the country. Dhanaji had already superseded Santaji as *Senapati*. He had served with distinction under Pratap Rao Gujar and fought at Umrani and Nesari. He came to be honoured as Jaising Rao for his victories against the Mughals. Certainly he was a great general, though he lacked the fire and flash of his murdered rival.

We need not follow Aurangzeb in his tale of woe in all detail. The *denouement* of his life was an unspeakable tragedy. During the last eight years (1699–1707), like a petty miser counting and recounting his coins, the senile Emperor was obsessed with taking and retaking forts. 'The rest of his life is a repetition of the same sickening tale', says Sarkar : 'a hill-fort captured by him after a vast expenditure of time, men and money, the fort recovered by the Marathas from the weak Mughal garrison after a few months and ita siege begun again by the Mughals a year or two later ! His soldiers and camp-followers suffered unspeakable hardships in marching over flooded rivers, muddy roads, and broken hilly tracks; porters disappeared; transport beasts died of hunger and overwork; scarcity of grain was ever present in his camp. His officers wearied of this labour of Sisyphus; but Aurangzeb would burst into wrath at any suggestion of return to Northern India and taunted the unlucky consellor with cowardice and love of ease ...Therefore, the Emperor must conduct every operation in person, or nothing would be done.'

Leaving Brahmapuri (Islampur), which he had occupied continuously from 1695–99, Aurangzeb took Vasantgad in November 1699; Satara occupied him from Dec. 1699 — April 1700: Parli, April—June 1700; Panhala and Pavangad, March —May 1701; Vardhan, Nandgiri, Chandan-Vandan, June—Oct.; Vishalgad, Dec.—June 1702; Simhagad, Dec. — April 1703; Rajgad, Dec.—Feb. 1704; Torna, Feb.—March; and Wagingera, Feb.—April 1795. Halting at Khawaspur (1700), Khataw (1701), Bahadurgad, (1702, Poona (1703), Khed (1704), and Devapur (1705), during the rains each year, destiny overtook the aged Emperor at last in October 1705. Breaking up his camp at Devapur on the 23rd of that month he set out for the North in a *palki*. He reached his 'journey's end' at Ahmednagar on the morning of Friday, 20 February 1707. Indeed, as he used to say.'

'In a twinkle, in a minute, in a breath,
The condition of the world changeth.'

The Marathas pursued him like Yama to the very verge of earthly existence. Like the rats of Bishop Hatto, helter skelter they poured in, at all times and places. When Aurangzeb commenced his fatal retreat, some fifty to sixty thousand Marathas pursued him, cutting off his supplies and stragglers and even threatening to break into his very camp. The Emperor left annihilation and anarchy behind him. 'Many mansabdars in the Deccan,' writes Bhimsen, 'starving and impoverished, have gone over to the Marathas.' In April, or May 1706 a vast Maratha force appeared within four miles of the imperial entourage. Khan-i-Alam was despatched to drive them away, but he was hopelessly overwhelmed. Strong reinforcements, however, kept the Marathas at arm's length, but not out of harm's way, after severe fighting.

In Gujarat, Dhanaji Jadhav sacked Baroda in March 1706. Nazrat Ali, the imperial *faujdar* was taken prisoner, and the other Mughal officers fled to Broach. Similar raids were carried into the outskirts of Ahmednagar in May. In the south, the Marathas captured Penukonda, 'the key of both the Karnataks,' and attacked Sira. A hit-and-run campaign was kept up incessantly by the Marathas, allowing no respite to the Mughals.

To sum up, from the campaign of Rajaram, 'As before, the Maratha army was formed into three divisions. Dhanaji Jadhav, in addition to his supreme command, led one division. Parashuram Trimbak led the second and Shankar Narayan the third. Early in 1699 Rajaram took the field with the combined divisions, amounting at least to sixty thousand men; and as the army advanced northwards, it was joined by brigades under Parsoji Bhosle, the founder of the Bhosle house of Nagpur, Haibatrao Nimbalkar, Nemaji Sindia, and Atole. This mighty force moved towards the Godavari valley. The Mughal garrisons who tried to resist were overwhelmed. Dhanaji Jadhav defeated one large body of imperial troops near Pandharpur. Shankar Narayan cleared another contingent under Sarza Khan out of the Puna district. Entering the valley of the Godavari, Rajaram publicly proclaimed his right to levy from it the *chauth* and the *sardeshmukhi*.... From those villages that could not pay, bonds were taken.From the Godavari valley Rajaram reached into Khandesh and Berar. This time he came not as a mere raider; and to convince the inhabitants that he would give them protection, and exercise sovereignty, he divided the country into military districts and left in them strong detachments under distinguished generals. Khanderao Dabhade took command in Baglan and northern Nasik. Parsoji Bhosle was made governor of Berar, Nemaji Sindia, governor of Khandesh, and Haibatrao Nimbalkar, governor of the valley of the Godavari. Rajaram himself led a large body of cavalry to plunder the rich city of Jalna, some miles south-east of Aurangabad. After the departure of the regent (i.e. Rajaram), Nemaji Sindia won an important success near Nandarbar, a large town some eighty miles east of Surat. It was while returning from Jalna that Rajaram had died at Simhagad in March 1700. The domestic quarrels which ensued and the civil war with Shahu after his return from the imperial camp in 1707, will be dealt with in the next volume. This indeed created another major crisis in the history of the Marathas, but the manner in which they met it might be briefly characterised in the words of Khwafi Khan, the Mughal historian:

'When Ram Raja (Rajaram) died, leaving only widows and infants, men thought that the power of the Marathas over the Dakhin was at an end. But Tara Bai, the elder wife (of Rajaram), made her son of three years old successor to his father, and took the reigns of government into her own hands. She took vigorous measures for ravaging the Imperial territory, and sent armies to plunder the six *subas* of the Dakhin as far as Sironj, Mandisor, and the *suba* of Malwa. She won the hearts of her officers, and for all the struggles and schemes, the campaigns and sieges of Aurangzeb up to the end of his reign, the power of the Marathas increased day by day. By hard fighting, by the expenditure of the vast treasures accumulated by Shah Jahan, and by the sacrifice of many thousands of men, he had penetrated into their wretched country, had subdued their lofty forts, and had driven them from house and home; still the daring of the Marathas increased, and they penetrated into the old territories of the Imperial throne, plundering and destroying wherever they went. In imitation of the Emperor, who with his armies and enterprising *amirs* was staying in those distant mountains, the commanders of Tara Bai cast the anchor of permanence wherever they penetrated, and having appointed *kamaishdars* (revenue collectors) they passed the years and months to their satisfaction with their wives and children, tents and elephants. Their daring went beyond all bounds. They divided all the *paraganas* (districts) among themselves, and following the practice of the Imperial rule they appointed their *subadars* (governors), *kamaishdasr* (revenue officers) and *rahdars* (toll-collectors).... They attacked and destroyed the country as far as the borders of Ahmedabad and the districts of Malwa, and spread their devastations through the provinces of the Dakhin to the environs of Ujjain. They fell upon and plundered large caravans within ten or twelve *kos* of the Imperial camp, and even had the hardihood to attack the royal treasure .... It would be a troublesome and useless task,' concludes Khwafi Khan, 'to commit to writing all their misdeeds : but it must suffice to record some few of the events which occurred in those days of sieges *which, after all, had no effect in suppressing the daring of the Marathas.*

Aurangzeb, at one moment, according to Bhimsen, had attempted appeasement, but it proved too late and futile: '*As the Marathas had not been vanquished, and the entire Deccan had come into their possession like a deliciously cooked pudding, why should they make peace*?..... The envoys of the Prince returned in dissappointment and Raja Shahu was again placed under surveillance in the *gulal bar*'.

CHAPTER XII

THE ACHIEVEMENT

आहे तितुकें जतन करावें । पुढें आणिक मिळवावें ।
महाराष्ट्रराज्य करावें । जिकडे तिकडे ॥

—RAMDAS

'WHATSOEVER there is should be conserved; more should be acquired; the Maharashtra kingdom should be extended, in all directions.' The objectives of the Marathas could not have been put more clearly than in these words of Swami Ramdas. We have in the preceding chapters examined the history of the Marathas from the advent of Islamic power in the Deccan to the death of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (1295-1707). During these four hundred and odd years we witnessed the rise of a new force which was to shape the destiny of India for a little over another hundred years. The eighteenth century was a great turning point in the history of modern India. It saw the catastrophe of the Mughal Empire, the climax of the Maratha power, the fall of the French and the rise of the British dominion in our country. The British really conquered India neither from the French nor from the Mughals, but from the Marathas. The ultimate failure of the last named in building up a free and prosperous Hindusthan has prejudiced critics to such a degree that their role in Indian history has been greatly misjudged. Indeed, nothing succeeds like success, and historians are almost invariably partial towards the successful. However, truth demands an unbiased assessment. While the Marathas cannot escape from the just verdict of historians that they sadly missed a golden opportunity to create in the whole of India a *Maha-Rashtra* or 'Great Dominion,' we should not be blind to their great achievments. There is, undoubtedly a tide in the affairs of men, and the Marathas were no exception. They were not merely unfortunate; but they also blundered. They had their own faults and shortcomings. Yet, to judge

a people in their total effort finally we should examine their entire history. We would therefore reserve this for later consideration. At the present stage of our enquiry, we can do no better than tentatively focus the reader's attention on what the Marathas achieved during the four centuries which elapsed between the invasion of Ala-ud-Din Khalji and the the death of Aurangzeb. It will be admitted that this was by all tests an honest record and a proud achievment.

To begin with, we witnessed how, for lack of leadership, during the earlier centuries of the Muslim advance into the Deccan, Maharashtra was not merely over-run by the Yavana hordes but also all but totally overwhelmed. Without trying to recount in detail the nature of this calamity, we might roundly characterise the reaction in the words of Sewell, who wrote about Vijayanagar: 'Everything seemed to be leading up to one inevitable end—the ruin and devastation of the Hindu provinces, the annihilation of their old royal houses, the destruction of their religion, their temples, their cities. All that the dwellers in the south held most dear seemed tottering to its fall. But suddenly, about the year 1344 A.D., there was a check to this foreign invaaion–a stop–a halt–then a solid wall of opposition; and for 250 years South India was saved.... The success of the early kings was phenomenal.'

Despite this success of the Vijayanagar kings history was to repeat itself. Rakkastangadi, in 1565, appeared to have undone all the good work of the Rayas. When the sun of the glories of Vijayanagar set with the red glow of destruction in that fateful year, the dark sky of the Hindus of the peninsula was studded only with innumerable orbs of a lesser magnitude. The Nayaks and Poligars, indeed, shed a baleful halo which boded no good to anybody in the south. Sri Ranga Raya verily struggled heroically to renovate the vanished empire, but he was doomed to fail in that anarchical age. His people had lost the inspiration, and he lacked the genius and personality to ride the storm. Like the heroes of Rajasthan in North India, after an epoch of glorious resistance to the foreign invaders, South India as well appeared to have succumbed to a spell of exhaustion. But thanks to the character of the Marathas, Hindu civilization was again saved.

The rise of the Maratha power has hardly a parallel in the history of India. Neither the Rajputs nor the Sikhs, with all their noble qualities, could ever rise to the great eminence reached by the Marathas. Even the achievments of Vijayanagar were confined to the south of the Tungabhadra, though its inspiration watered the roots of Maratha freedom. The uniqueness of the Maratha movement lay in its national character. It was not the creation of any single individual; but it was born out of the sufferings of a great people,—a people with a number of virtues which gave rise to and sustained the Maratha effort to build up an independent state. The hidden sources of its strength were not forged in the armories which fashioned the crude weapons of the rough Maratha soldiers, but lay in the character of the people and their country. How far the geography of Maharashtra shaped the history and fortunes of its people is too large a question to be discussed here. But we are inclined to emphasise the *human* more than the *natural* (i.e. geographical and physical) elements in the moulding of Maratha history. Race and environments,—soil, climate, and the rivers, mountains and valleys—did indeed play a very important role; but we are more interested in knowing what the Marathas, so circumstanced, did in order to improve their lot. From this point of view, even the much discussed ethnology of the people of Maharashtra, and the Kshatriya lineage of the Bhosles and other ruling families are of secondary and purely academic interest. The total achievement was the resultant of all these factors, no doubt; but it was the moral character and political genius of the people of Maharashtra that brought about the result which alone concerns us here. If race and physical enviromments decided the character of a people's history, we can hardly account for the rise and fall of nations and states. Even this philosophical question need not divert us from our historical factual survey. The Marathas of our study were confronted with a very natural and human problem: namely, the problem of survival. They were threatened with cultural and political extinction, but they showed guts, moral fibre, and political tenacity. By virtue of these they survived, achieved their freedom, and, what is of greater historical importance, also made creative contribution to the

heritage of the Hindus. To note these is our main business in this chapter.

The collapse of the Hindus before the armies of the Khaljis and the Tughlaqs revealed the hollowness of the Yadava dominion. In the matter of defence of the realm—the most fundamental duty of every government—the earlier rulers of Maharashtra had miserably failed. The people had to pay for the delinquency by over three centuries of political subjection to the conquerors. But the inherent character of the Marathas—their will and courage never to submit or yield, their pertinacity—ultimately brought them victory and freedom. This was a plant of slow growth, but its roots were deep down in the soil of Maharashtra. The nation was alive though fallen for a long while. Its character is to be judged, not by its fall, but by its revival. Dead wood does not revive; a corpse does not rise from its grave. The Maratha revival showed that the heart of Maharashtra was quite sound even while its limbs were paralysed. More than anything else, its faith had not been shaken by the Muslim arms or its vision dimmed by defeat on the battle-fields. Through 'blood, sweat, tears and toil' the soil of Maharashtra worked its way to triumph.

If the preceding chapters have shown anything, it is that the triumph of the Marathas was the triumph of a *people*, a *nation* rather than that of a few men of genius. The role of the leaders is, no doubt, of very great importance; but no leader can succeed without a following worthy of his leadership. Maratha history reveals that the people were not merely worthy of their leaders, but that they showed their mettle even in the absence of them. Leadership means organization: there was the absence of it under Ramdev Rao, and the triumph of it under Shivaji. But a people once awakened, and awakened properly, can never be put down. This is the meaning of the struggle which ensued after the death of Shivaji and its culmination in the dynamic freedom of Maharashtra.

It is significant that, when Ala-u'd-Din Khalji invaded the country, it was Kanha, a provincial governor, and two wo men who fought against the aggressor while the king himself was listless and apathetic. Shankardev and Harapaldev, again,

indicated the differenee between the elder and the younger generations. Janardan Swami, Ekanath and Ramdas bore testimony to the essentially pragmatic outlook of the people of Maharashtra. As we have explained in an earlier chapter, even pure saints like Dnanadev, Namdev, and Tukaram—may be non-politically—poured life into the atrophied limbs of Maharashtra and filled them with a fresh outlook and energy. *A people must have faith before they can fight for it. They must have something precious to preserve to make it worth dying for it. The value of the work of the saints, therefore, lay in making the people conscious of the treasures of the great heritage of the Hindus.* How successful and widespread this leaven was, was indicated by the message being propagated by not merely a potter like Gora, a tailor like Namdev, a gardener like Savta, and a goldsmith like Narahari, but also by a maid servant like Jana Bai, a prostitute like Kanhopatra, a mahar like Chokha, and a barber like Sena.* To avoid being misunderstood, it is necessary to emphasize that their mission was *spiritual, not political* ; but Ramdas showed the bearing of the one upon the other. If Tukaram was like St. Francis of Assissi, Ramdas was like St.Dominic, Peter the Hermit and Ignatius Loyola. Shivaji was Mazzini, Cavour and Garibaldi rolled into one: the Maratha *resorgimento* was a compound of many elements and forccs too complex and numerous to be simply analysed in terms of 'proteins and carbohydrates or vitamins a, b, c, etc.' of nationhood.

Next to the role of the saints, that of the active resisters of aggression like Kanha, Shankardev and Harpaldev, Mukund Rao, Nag Nak (of Kondana), Shankar Rao (of Sangameshwar, and the Shirkes (of Khelna) ought to find honourable mention. They were followed by a numerous body of adventurers and soldiers, *bargirs* and *siledars*, *karkuns* and *hamavisdars*), *rahdars* and *jasuds*, *sardars* and *mansabdars*,—men of all conditions and ranks who, through the very channels of submission and service, gathered experience and merits that were to constitute the bedrock of self-government. The *Desais* and *Sardesais*, the *Deshmukhs* and *Sardeshmukhs*, and even the

* And also the unique Muslim saint Sheikh Muhammad, author of *oga-Sangrama*.

Kulkarnis and *Patils* were to be the pillars of the new State. At first as rebels, then as mercenaries; later as adventurers and careerists,—these people of Maharashtra—Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Marathas,Kunbis, Kolis and even Ramosis—were, like pebbles in a running brook, being shaped into a mighty force by the stream of history. To begin with, most of them were unconscious agents, but progressively evolving into conscious pioneers of a new order in Maharashtra. The historical process was transforming men of the type of Shahji into those of the character of Shivaji. Peasants were being moulded into Tanajis and Bajis, and women were becoming inspirers like Jija Bai and Tara Bai. Baser metal was occasionally found mixed with the gold, but the balance was on the whole favourable to Maharashtra. Meticulous scholars have laboured to pick out the black-sheep from the white, and to show that 'among the Marathas not much union was seen'. The evidence cited, however, is too scanty to be convincing. Despite the defections pointed out (of some Jadhavs, Mores, Khopades and Pisals, etc.) it was the patriotic Marathas that triumphed against the better equipped imperialists. As the *Amatya* proudly declared: 'This kingdom was invaded by a powerful enemy in the person of Aurangzeb. He used all his valour (and) all his resources in wealth and other things for the destruction and conquest of this kingdom. But all his efforts proved futile by the grace of God !'

In the following pages, therefore, we shall be citing evidence, or samples, of the total Maratha achievement rather than illustrations of individual genius or accomplishments. It cannot be too often emphasized that, as we have stated before, the creations of Shivaji were also the achievements of the race; because Shivaji himself was a creature of Maharashtra. He was undoubtedly a man of superb genius, but not less a Maratha on that account. He was the embodiment of the spirit of his age and country and gave direction and shape to a power that had already come into existence. Shivaji was great because he understood his people—their needs, aspirations and character—thoroughly. He was great because he had the larger vision and capacity to exploit the situation fully for the everlasting glory of Maharashtra. Maratha *Svarajya*

which was the combined product of all these forces—individual and national—bore distinct marks of the Maratha genius.

The title of *Chhatrapati* itself, as pointed out before, was unique. So was also the form and character of the administration which Shivaji brought into existence. Far from being a mere imitation of what prevailed in the neighbouring Muslim States and the Mughal Empire, the Maratha creation was an improvement as much in matters of detail as of policy; as much in the civil government as in the military organization. These have been very well described and discussed at length by other writers, and it is not necessary, in our scope, to repeat all that has been said by them.* But a few outstanding features might be usefully stressed here.

In the first stage of their recovery the Marathas, as we have noted, gathered valuable experience as mere mercenaries and servants. Then came the stage of revolt. Shivaji in his earlier days was leader and organizer of this. But revolt is essentially negative, though to be successful and fruitful—as the Maratha movement was—it must be inspired by positive ideals. Shivaji was a man of action and a statesman. His ideals were therefore embodied in his actions. We need recall only a few illustrations here to characterize them.

The first illustration of his manner and spirit was his interview with Kanhoji Jedhe and the exchange of oaths which took place between them on the eve of the encounter with Afzal Khan. The whole account of the incident, cited earlier, bears authentic testimony to the spirit of dedication to patriotic service and sacrifice that manifested itself in the awakened Maharashtra of those days. The second example is that of Shivaji's letter to Maloji Ghorpade. There was a bitter feud between the two branches of the Bhosle family. But Shivaji appealed to the need for unity and tried to bring about a combination of all the Deccani interests—Hindu as well as Muhammadan—against the foreigners. 'The Pathans should be destroyed and steps should be taken to keep the Padshahi of the Deccan in the hands of the Deccanis.' The third instance is that of Shivaji's treatment of his brother

* Cf. D. V. Kale, *op.cit.*

Vyankoji. His warning to him in the classic terms of the *Mahabharata* is at once an illustration of his intentions and outlook. The advice finally embodied in the Treaty between the two brothers is a political document of rare value. It clearly enunciates the principles on which Shivaji based his administration: they were principles calculated to make the civil and military organizations efficient as well as just. Lastly, we would refer here to the great charter of civil rights guaranteed by Shivaji in his proclamation of 28 January 1677 (quoted *in extenso* in the Appendix). That his State was broadbased upon the goodwill and welfare of all his people, including his Muslim subjects, has been amply testified to by impartial observers. There was not another ruler like Shivaji in this respect, perhaps, with the singular exception of Akbar.

The beginnings of his system have been outlined for us in the account given of it by Sabhasad. Though it appears to be somewhat scrappy and unsystematic, it is none the less authentic and happens to be the earliest connected account available of Shivaji's embryo State organization. We make therefore no excuse in reproducing it in extenso.

'The Raje,' writes Sabhasad, 'appointed officers and framed the following regulations for the management of the forts that had been captured.' In every fort there were to be a *havaldar*, a *sabnis* and a *sarnobat*,—all three of equal status. They were to conjointly carry on the administration. There was to be a store of grain and war *materiel* in the fort to be looked after by a *karkhanis*. The accounts of income and expenditure were also to be maintained by him. In larger and more important forts, there were to be five to seven *Tat sarnobats* who were to divide the ramparts among themselves and keep vigilance over their respective areas. Of every 10 men to be stationed in a garrison, one was to be a *naik*; the other nine to be *paiks*. 'Men of good families should in this manner be recruited.' Of the forces, the musketeers (*bandukhi*), the spearmen (*atekari*), the archers (*tirandaj*), and the light-armed men (*ad-hatyari*), were to be personally selected by the Raje himself to make sure that each man was 'brave and shrewd'. The *havaldar* and *sarnobat* were to be Marathas of good family, whose integrity was to be assured by some

hujrat or officer of the royal staff. A Brahman was similarly chosen to be *sabnis*, and a Prabhu to be *karkhanis*. 'In this manner each officer appointed should be different (in caste) from the others.' The fort was not to be left in the charge of a *havaldar* alone: 'No single individual could surrender the fort to any rebel or miscreant. In this manner was the administration of the fort carefully and newly organised'.

Similarly, *pagas* were organized in the army. The *shiledars* were placed under the jurisdiction of a *paga*. 'To none was left independence to rebel.' Maratha troops with horses were called *bargirs*; 25 *bargirs* were under a *havaldar*; a division of 5 *havaldars* (with the *bargirs* under them) formed a *jumla*, which was to be under a *jumladar*. The salary of a *jumladar* was fixed at 500 *hons*, with a palanquin. His *majumdar* was paid 100 to 125 *hons*. For every 25 horses there was to be a farrier (*nalband*) and a water-carrier (*pakhalji*). Ten *jumladars* were placed under a *hajari* whose salary was 1,000 *hons*, with a *mujumdar*, a Maratha *karbhari*, and a Kayastha Prabhu *jamnis* attached. 500 hons were allotted for these latter. Salary and palanquin were given to each individual according to his rank. Accounts of income and expenditure were to be made out in the presence of all the four. Five *hajaris* were to be under a *panch hajari*, whose salary was to be 2,000 *hons* (with a *majumdar*, a *karbhari*, and a *jamnis* attached). Over five such officers was the *sarnobat* or commander-in-chief. The *siledars* also being similarly organized were equally under the *sarnobat*. The higher grade officers (*hajari*, *panch hajari* and *sarnobat*) were further served by *vaknavises* (news-writers), *harkaris* (couriers and spies), and *jasuds* (messengers) appointed by the *sarnobat*. 'Bahirji Jadhav, a very shrewd man, was appointed *Naik* of the *jasuds* under the *sarnobat*. This man was selected after great scrutiny'.

The army regulations were conceived carefully and enforced strictly. The armies were to come into cantonments in the home territories during the rainy season. Grains, fodder, medicines, thatched houses for men and stables for horses were to be provided. They were to march out after *Dasara*. At the time of their departure an inventory was to be prepared of all things belonging to every person (high and

low). While out campaigning in the foreign territories (*mulukhagiri*), the troops were expected to subsist on their spoils. There were to be no women, female slaves or dancing-girls, in the army. He who was found keeping them was to be beheaded. 'In enemy territories, women and children should not be captured. Cows should not be taken. Bullocks should be requisitioned for transport purposes only. Brahmans should not be molested. Where contributions are laid no Brahman should be taken as a surety. None should commit adultery.'

For eight months during each year the army was to be out campaigning in foreign territories. On its way back, in the month of *Vaishakh*, it was to undergo a thorough search at the frontier. Whatever a trooper carried in excess of his pay was to be calculated, deducted or recovered from his salary, by comparison with the initial inventory. Articles of very great value were to be sent to the royal treasury. If any one was found hiding anything, the *sardar* (searching officer) was to punish him. After they returned to barracks the *sardars* were to account for everything to the Raje. 'There all accounts should be explained and the things should be delivered to His Majesty.' An account of the expenditure incurred by the army was also to be submitted. If any surplus was due to the contingents 'it should be asked for *in cash* from His Majesty.' Then they were to return to the barracks.

Saranjams were granted to those who had worked hard during the late campaign. If any one had been guilty of violating the rules or of *cowardice*, an enquiry was to be instituted and 'the truth to be ascertained by the consensus of many,' and the offender dismissed. Investigations were not to be delayed. The army was then to rest for four months, until next *Dasara* when it would march out again according to the orders of the Raje. Such were the rules of the army.'

Similarly, among the Mavales, there was to be a *Naik* for every ten men; and a *havaldar* over every five *Naiks* (or 50 men). Over two or three *Naiks* was a *jumladar*; and a *hazari* over ten *jumladars*. The *jumladar* was paid 100 *hons* per annum with a *sabnis* who was paid 40 *hons*. The salary of a *hazari* was 500 *hons*, that of his *sabnis*, 100-125 *hons*. Over seven *hazaris* was a *Sarnobat*. Yesaji Kank was the first to be ap-

pointed to this command. 'Everybody was to abide by his orders.'

To the *Sarnobats*, the *Majumdars*, the *Karkuns*, and the men on the personal staff of the Raje, salary was paid by assignments on the land revenue. The lands cultivated by them were taxed like those of the ordinary *rayats*, and the dues credited as part of their salaries. The balance was paid by *varat* or orders to pay on the *Huzur* (Central Govt.) or on the District treasuries. 'In this manner were their accounts punctually settled.' *Mokasa Mahals* or villages with absolute rights were on no account to be granted to the men on military service. Every payment was to be made by *varat* or in cash. None but the *Karkuns* had any jurisdiction over the lands. All payments to the army and the fort-establishments were made by them. 'If *mokasas* were granted, the *rayats* would grow unruly and wax strong, and the collection regulations would no longer be obeyed'. If the *rayats* grew powerful, there would be disturbances in various places. Those who were granted *mokasas* would join with the *zamindars* and rebel. Therefore, *mokasas* should not be assigned to anybody.'

Karkuns were also to be appointed for investigating into the conquered provinces. Intelligent and experienced men were to be appointed as *daftardars* in the *Mujumdar's* office in each *mahal* and *suba* to keep accounts and draft papers. Then, as matters progressed, intelligent and careful *havaldars* were to be picked out and the *subas* conferred on them. The *mamla* of each *mahal* was to be given to a clever *Mujumdar* of the *suba*, 'skilled in writing and conversant with accounts'. One who had not served as a *kamavisdar* or one who could not write was not to be put in charge of a district or province. 'Such a man should be sent back on being told either *to serve under the Badashahi* (!) or to enlist as a *shiledar* with his own horse.'

Of the *karkuns* employed in the provinces, the *havaldar*, according to the size of his *mahal*, was to be paid from 4 or 5 to 300 *hons*; the *Mujumdar*, from 3, 4, 5, 50 or 75 *hons*. Over two *mahals* yielding a *lakh*, 1¼ *lakh*, and ¾ *lakh*, of *hons* (approximately) were to be a *Subadar* and a *karkun*. To them was to be assigned a salary of 400 *hons* per man. The *Majum-*

dar appointed to the *suba* got a salary of 100—125 *hons*. The *Subadar* was expected to maintain a *palanquin* for which he received an allowance of 400 *hons*. The *majumdar* received a sunshade (*abdagiri*) allowance....All officers with a salary of 100 *hons*, while out on expedition, were required to maintain a sunshade. In the home dominions, a *suba* was placed in charge of a tract yielding one *lakh* of *rupees*. To the unsettled tracts on the frontiers, a force of infantry, cavalry, and militia, 'as strong as each place might require,' was sent with the *karkun* in charge of *mulukhgiri*.

Likewise all lands in the provinces were surveyed, including forest areas. The measurements were fixed as follows:— The length of a measuring rod was five cubits and five *muthis*. A cubit was fourteen *tansus* (तंसु). The length of the rod was to be 80 *tansus*. 20 *kathis* (rods) square made one *bhiga* ; and 120 *bhigas* made one *chavar*. The area of every village was ascertained according to these standards. An estimate was made of the produce (grain) of each *bhiga*, and after dividing it into five shares, three were given to the *rayats* ; two were taken by government. New *rayats* were given cattle and seeds. Money grants were also made, to be recovered in two to four years, according to the means of the *rayat*. The *karkun* collected in kind, according to the assessment in each village, at the time of the harvest. In the provinces, the *rayats* were not to be under the jurisdiction of the *zamindars*, the *Deshmukhs* and the *Desais*. 'If they attempted to plunder the *rayats*, by assuming authority, it does not lie in their power. Studying the defects and evils obtaining in the Badsahi provinces, the raje demolished the strongholds of the *Mirasdars* in the conquered parts of the *Des*. Where there were important forts, he garrisoned them with his own men, and nothing was left in the hands of the *Mirasdars*. 'This done, he prohibited all that the *Mirasdars* used to levy at their sweet will, by *Inam* right or revenue farming, and fixed the assessments in cash and grains; for the *zamindars*, as well as the *Deshmuks*, the *Deshkulkarnis*, the *Patils*, and the *Karkuns*, their rights and perquisites were defined according to the yield of the village.' The *zamindars* were forbidden to build castles with bastions.

Finally, grants were made to all the temples in the country

for the proper maintenance of lights (दिवाबत्ती), offerings (नैवेद्य) and other services (अभिषेक). Even the state-allowances to the shrines of the Muhammadan *pirs* and mosques were continued, according to the importance of each place. Suitable allowances were also granted to pious and learned Brahmans to enable them to carry on their sacred duties. The *karkuns* were to convey to them annually the allowances and perquisites granted. 'In this manner,' writes Sabhasad, 'the Raja ruled his kingdom, continuing his enquiries about the forts and the strongholds, the army and the militia, the provinces and the personal staff.'

The system founded by Shivaji not merely worked well under the guidance and supervision of his personal genius but also survived the tests of time and circumstances. The crises which followed the death of Shivaji in succession, and the vicissitudes of fortune which his nascent State and people experienced during the thirty years which preceded the rise of the Peshwas, proved the wisdom of his arrangements. Though a very large part of the credit for this achievement belongs to the system which Shivaj brought into existence, we cannot, however, emphasise too often the role of the Maratha people at large. Without their grit and sagacity Maratha *Svarajya* might have crumbled into dust under the determined attacks of Aurangzeb. There is no other instance in Indian history where the people withstood organised might on such a wide scale and over such a length of time successfully. The sustained Maratha resistance, practically over the whole of the southern peninsula, is a unqiue and admirable achievement. Except by an assessment of the totality of the forces involved, the rise of the Maratha nation into all-India importance cannot be adquately explained. *Shivaji was the brain of this mighty movement; its heart was represented by the saints of Maharashtra; and its limbs, which translated ideas and emotions into facts of history, were spread out all over the country.*

Apart from the details of the Maratha civil and military organisation which it is not our intention to describe here, the quintessence of their political genius is contained in what is known as the *Adnapatra* ascribed to the great *Amatya* Ramachandrapant Bavdekar. Nominally it was issued by

Sambhaji of Kolhapur on 21 November 1716, but in reality composed by Ramachandrapant who served under Shivaji, Sambhaji, Rajaram and Sambhaji II. In effect it therefore embodies the collective experience of four generations of Maratha rulers in the most momentous period of their history (1672-1716).

Born in 1650, Ramachandrapant became *Amatya* in succession to his father (Nilkantha) in 1672, and rose to the position of *Hukumat Panha* under Rajaram (1689-1700). We have already estimated his character and services to the Maratha State, in the last chapter. In the words of Professor S. V. Puntambekar, "His *Rajaniti* is one of the greatest literary legacies relating to the War of Maratha Independence and the principles of state policy which the great Shivaji laid down." Even in the literature of State-craft in India as a whole, it holds a place of unique interest and importance. It is not an academic book like *Sukraniti* or the *Artha Shastra*, but a condensed record of the actual and tested political wisdom of the Maratha race. It breathes in every sentence the atmosphere in which it was conceived and reflects the empiricism of a most practical people. A summary of its main principles ought to form an important part of any survey of the early achievements of the Marathas.

The first two sections of the *Adnapatra* deal with the troubles of the kingdom during the War of Independence. The remaining seven are of importance because they deal respectively with the General Principles of State Policy and Organization, Administrative and Ministerial Policy and Organisation, Commercial Policy, Policy towards *Watandars* Policy regarding Hereditary *Vrittis* and *Inams*, Policy about Forts, and Naval Policy.

Summing up the great work of Shivaji, the *Adnapatra* says: 'In this manner he subdued every enemy in the way in which he should be conquered, and created and acquired a Kingdom free from thorns (enemies) and extending from Salheri-Ahivant to Chanji and the banks of the Kaveri; and he also acquired hundreds of hill-forts as well as sea-forts, several great places, forty thousand state cavalry and sixty to seventy thousand *siledars*, two lakhs of foot soldiers, innumerable treasures, similarly the best jewellery and all kinds of

articles. He regenerated the Marathas of the ninety-six noble families. Having ascended the throne he held the royal umbrella and called himself *Chhatrapati*. He rescued the *Dharma*, established Gods and Brahmans in their due places and maintained the six-fold duties of sacrifice....according to the division of the (four) *varnas*. He destroyed the existence of thieves and other criminals in the Kingdom. He created a new type of administration for his territories, forts and armies, and conducted the government without hindrance and brought it under one system of co-ordination and control. *He created wholly a new order of things'*.

The preamble closes with the observation : 'In order that princes of long life, ornaments to the kingdom, should be well-versed in political affairs and that other governors and officers in various parts of the country should protect the State by conducting themselves according to principles of good government. His Majesty (Sambhaji II) has prepared this treatise in accordance with the *Shastras*. Remembering it well you should see that princes are educated according to its principles. Likewise the kingdom should be protected by making all the people do their duties in consonance with it and according to the functions allotted to them.'

The King being the highest functionary of the State, the *Adnapatra* looks upon him as divinely appointed. If the people have no protector, who could make for them one common law, they would quarrel and fight with one another and be destroyed ; this should not happen. All the people should be free from trouble and should follow the path of *Dharma*. 'Out of compassion for the people God in his full favour has granted us this kingdom.'

The sections dealing with the duties of kings, no doubt, read like counsels of perfection. But it is well to remember that the Marathas, far from being bandits, worshipped high and noble ideals. 'Kings who lived in the past,' according to the *Adnapatra*, 'succeeded in this world and acquired the next with the help of *Dharma*.' It therefore enjoins on the King : 'believing with a firm faith in the practice of *Dharma*, the worship of God, the acquisition of the favour of saintly persons, the attainment of the welfare of all, the prosperity of the dynasty and the kingdom should be uninterru pted and

regulated.... *Holding universal compassion towards the blind, the crippled, the diseased, the helpless and those without any means of subsistence, he should arrange for their means of livelihood so long as they live'.*

Appreciating the value and importance of servants, the treatise lays down : *'By taking work from those according to the functions allotted to them* and *by treating all with equal regard* by virtue of his authority, he should keep them contented and *look after them so that none of them would feel any want about their maintenance.* Everything should be done which would keep them ready and pleased in his service. If any doubt is felt at some time or other about their conduct, an *immediate inquiry should be made in accordance with justice* ....*They should be paid well* so that they should not find it necessary to look to others for their maintenance.... From amongst them every one should be promoted and encourged according to the measure or importance of his work... In this way, after appreciating the merit of every one according to the efforts made by him, he should be duly rewarded. Otherwise, if he be given less, the fault of want of appreciation would fall to his credit ; and, if he be given more, carelessness would be attributed to him; but when he knows the real nature of work, both these faults would not occur.'

The sense of proportion and seriousness of outlook about affairs of State is reflected in the instructions regarding entertainments, and the patronage of poets, bards and jesters : 'The chief function of the King is the effective supervision of State affairs. There should be no break in this.' Poets and bards should be entertained at the Court. 'But *hearing only selfpraise is a very great fault.* For this purpose one should not get wholly absorbed in their company by neglecting State affairs.' They should not be invited at the time of conducting State business. 'Kings should not at all indulge in the habit of making jokes. Friends are after all servants.' Too great familiarity would breed contempt, slacken discipline and undermine dignity.

The duty and wisdom of consultation is thus appropriately inculcated : The King should first think independently of any work to be done ; then he should consult experts in the business. 'Whatever leads to the success of the work undertaken

should be done by accepting the best possible advice given. If he insists on his own plan, his servant would not at all speak out the merits and defects of the work proposed. Hencc the intelligence and initiative of servants does not get full scope for development, but rather they get atrophied and the work gets spoilt. Similarly, if he regards the glory achieved as satisfactory, then he does not feel inclined for further exertion. As a result the enemy would find the occasion for an invasion and the kingdom would suffer. This should not be allowed to happen. *While protecting what is already acquired, new achievements should always be attempted and this should continuously remain the aim of the King.*' It is interesting to note the identity of Ramdas's words inscribed over this chapter with the last italicised sentence above.

Intensely practical as the Marathas were they recognised that 'Finance is the life of the State. In times of need if there is money all the perils are averted. Therefore with this aim in view the State treasury should be filled.' The advice regarding payment of work is equally shrewd and salutary: 'Servants should be paid well and without any reluctance. If any special work is done by them or if they are burdened with a family they should be given something (in addition) by way of gifts. But any more salary than what is attached to an office should not be paid for any special work done in the same office. The reason is that if any one's salary is increased, other servants of the same rank ask for an additional salary, and if not paid they get discontented. If any one's salary is increased owing to his influence, the salaries of all others who are of the same rank will have to be increased because they are similar to one another. Then the whole organization will break down...For this reason salary should be paid according to rules, and rewards should be given according to special work done. But where the salary is fixed, no change should at all be made.'

If so much care and thought were bestowed on the rewards and remunerations of servants greater care and caution was also necessary in their selection and appointment. The principles and tests recommended for employment in the royal troops might be taken as typical of the standards aimed at in the entire administration for all practical purposes. 'Those

persons should be employed in the body of royal troops,' states the Edict, 'who are very brave, powerful, select, thoroughly obedient, and the very mention of whose name will extort admiration in the army and the country, and who on occasion will inspire terror. Those who are capricious, arrogant, unrestrained, childish, vicious, defaming, vilifying and have acted treacherously towards their previous master should not at all be kept in the body of royal troops. For on the strength and assurance of the royal army one can remain free from anxiety about all matters. At times life has to be hazarded; other soldiers have to be kept within bounds. If this method of organization is kept up, all these things are attainable; otherwise not.'

But the writer is realistic enough to note that men of good character are not easily available at any time. 'Therefore while touring round in the country, in the army and in the small and big forts, the King should have an eye for proper men, and associating with him, in addition to his ministers, the best men wherever available, showing kindness to them and finding their worth, he should employ them in his body of royal troops.' If a man commits any wrong deserving of punishment, he should be immediately punished. 'There should be no weakness shown out of any consideration. If discipline is at all absent in the King's own troops, then how can it be expected to prevail outside?'

Further, the Edict adds: 'If any new servant is to be engaged, full enquiry should be made about his family, place of residence, relations and first service; and if he is not found fraudulent, profligate, or a spy on behalf of others, murderous drunkard, dissolute, very old, incapable of any work, he should be kept if found very brave. But no servant should be engaged without taking a surety for him. If he runs away after committing robbery, murder and other lawless acts, then the surety must be held responsible for the offender's conduct. This matter should not be neglected. Then the servant remains attentive (to his work) and does not go out of control, and the allotted work is done rightly.'

Then follow detailed instructions as to the behaviour of kings and the education of princes, with a special emphasis on tolerance. 'As the root of a tree makes the tree grow

strong in a well-watered place, so the King, who is the root of the kingdom and is endowed with virtues, causes the growth of the kingdom. The reason is that the ideal Hindu King is God himself who is the teacher of the whole world and is the distributor of weal and woe to all. If the King is endowed with virtues, then the welfare of the greatest number is possible; if he is possessed of vices, the misery of the most is the result. Therefore it is said that the King is the maker of the Age.'

The essential functions of the King are thus succinctly stated: 'In the kingdom the organization of royal troops, of small and large forts, of cavalry and infantry, the removal of the afflictions of the people, the protection of the people, the inquiry into the prevalence of *Dharma* and *adharma*, timely charity, regular distributions of fixed salaries, timely taxation of the people, and the storing of acquired things, a regular inquiry into the State income and expenditure,a resolve to do works great and small according to their importance after knowing their past and with an eye to their future, the meting out of punishment after considering the justice and injustice of a thing, and then determining its penalty according to the *Shastras*, the organization of means for removing the calamities of foreign invasion, receipt of news by appointing spies in all countries, the proper consideration of the duty of alliance, war and neutrality towards another State upon any particular occasion, and the determination of action according to it, the protection of the existing kingdom and the acquisition of new territory, the proper observation of the rules relating to female apartments and others, an increase of respect towards respectable men and the control of low-minded persons, the gaining of the favour of gods and good Brahmans devoted to the gods, and the destruction of irreligious tendencies, the spreading of the duties of religion, the acquisition of merit for the eternal world, and doing such other duties,—these are certainly the functions of a King.'

These ideals do not indicate that the Maratha kingdom was a predatory State. No civilized State could have better ideals. But to carry them out it was realized that good and capable ministers were as necessary as the King himself.

Ministers are therefore described as the pillars of the kingdom. 'A minister is one who spreads the King's power; he is a restraint on the sea of injustice born of the King's intoxication; he is like a goad of an elephant. Nay, a minister is the repose of the King in this world, because of his administration of State affairs, and the light for the next world on account of his protection of religion. Kings have no other relations or things higher than ministers; of all the servants, ministers should have the highest respect. Kings should appoint ministers possessed of good qualities, realizing fully that ministers alone are the King's true arms, that ministers alone are his relatives. The whole burden of the State should be placed on them.' Yet the King is advised not to leave too much in the hands of the ministers; he should himself be active and vigilant. Two points are particularly noteworthy in these instructions: (*a*) that it is very improper to entrust the whole burden of the State and the authority to punish, in all territories, to one man; (*b*) that the generals of the army should be made dependent on the minister. 'In this way, if at times a general quarrels with a minister, there will be no difficulty about punishment; nay, in all kinds of work one will be a check on the other. On this account, one feeling afraid of the other, carries out regularly the laws laid down.'

Nowhere else was the practical wisdom of Maratha policy shown better than in the matter of the hereditary *watandars*, *inamdars* and the *vritti* holders. They are described as small but independent chiefs of territories and sharers in the kingdom. 'They are not inclined to live on whatever *watan* they possess, or to always act loyally towards the King who is the lord of the whole country and to abstain from committing wrongs against any one. All the time they want to acquire new possessions bit by bit, and to become strong; and after becoming strong their ambition is to seize forcibly from some, and to create enmities and depredations against others Knowing that royal punishment will fall on them, they first take refuge with others, fortify their places with their help, rob the travellers, loot the territories and fight desperately, not caring even for their lives. When a foreign invasion comes they make peace with the invader, with a desire to

gain or keep a *watan*, meet personally the enemy, allow the enemy to enter the kingdom by divulging secrets of both sides, and then becoming harmful to the kingdom get to be difficult of control. For this reason the control of these people has to be very carefully devised.'

The directions given for the liquidation of this feudal anarchy are a masterpiece of political sagacity. 'Because these faults are found in them,' the Edict says, 'it would be a great injustice that they should be hated and that their *watans* should be discontinued; and on special occasions it would be a cause of calamity. If, on the contrary, that is not done and these people are given freedom of movement, their natural (wild) spirit would immediately find play. Therefore both of these extreme attitudes cannot be useful in the interest of State policy. They have to be kept positively between conciliation and punishment. Their existing *watans* should be continued, but their power over the people should be done away with. They should not be allowed to have any privileges or *watan* rights without a State charter. Whatever has come down to them from the past should not be allowed to increase nor to become less even by a little, and they should be made to obey the orders of the authorities of the territory. A group of kinsmen or agents should not be allowed to remain jointly on the *watan*. After making inquiries, their kinsmen and agents should each be kept in distant provinces along with their families by giving them work according to their abilities. They should not be allowed to get absorbed in their *watans*. *Watandars* should not be allowed to build even strong houses and castles. If by chance there is found anyone overbearing and unrestrained, he should be praised and sent to do that work which is difficult of achievement. In it if he succeeds or is ruined, both the events would be in the King's interest. If he is saved he should be given even more difficult work. *Watandars* should not be allowed to quarrel among themselves. They should be well flattered. But there are established usages for their behaviour and they should not be allowed to transgress even a little. If they are infringed, immediate punishment should be inflicted. Looking to the position of *watandars* and establishing, every year or two, proper relations with them, the

King should weaken them by taking a tribute and other things from them. When a *watandar* who has not infringed the duties of his station is near him, the King should speak about him to other servants that he is virtuous, honest and attached to him, and similarly those words which would give encouragement to him. If among the *watandars* there are honest persons, it is difficult to get other servants of their type. Firstly, if a *watandar* be a reliable person, and if in addition be honest, he is a veritable flower of gold which has smell. Therefore such *watandars* should be gathered together with great care; favours should be bestowed on them, respect should be shown to them, royal service should be entrusted to them, nay, they should be reserved to do important work.'

The same is said about the holders of *vrittis* and *inams*: 'If they are found fit, they should be told to do higher service, but should not be given a new *vritti*, for the reason that if a *vritti* be given out of public revenue, then the revenue would get less hereditarily by so much. Decrease of revenue leads to the decay of the kingdom, and to the loss of the wealth of the kingdom.... Similarly, it is a great injustice to give lands as *inams* to servants or *vritti*-holders for the purpose of achieving a task: A King if he be an enemy of his kingdom should be generous in granting lands. The King is called the Protector of the land for the sake of preserving the land; but if the land be given away, over what would he rule? Whose protector will he be? Even if a village or piece of land be given for every special service rendered,.... then it would so happen that in course of time, the whole kingdom would be granted away... Therefore a King who wishes to rule a kingdom, to increase it and to acquire fame as one who is skilled in politics, should not at all get infatuated and grant land to the extent of even a barley corn. To say that servants who have rendered service which is useful from generation to generation should be given something which would continue hereditarily is not proper. For, when he becomes a servant and accepts salary, then it is his duty to do his master's work by great exertion and daring,—putting his heart and soul into it. However, if one has done very meritorious service which could not have been done by others, then he should be given

a higher service with a *watan* or salary attached to it, so that there will be no infliction on the people nor any decrease in the public revenue.'

During the seventeenth century forts were of the utmost value to the struggle for freedom in Maharashtra. Hence a whole chapter of considerable length has been devoted to this subject in the *Adnapatra*. 'The essence of the whole kingdom,' it declares, 'is forts.' If there are no forts, during a foreign invasion, the open country becomes supportless and is easily desolated, and the people are routed and broken up. If the whole country is thus devastated, what else remains of the kingdom? Shivaji built this kingdom on the strength of forts. He also built forts along the sea-shore. With great exertion places suitable for forts should be captured in any new country which is to be conquered. The condition of a country without forts is like a land protected only by passing clouds. 'Therefore those who want to create a kingdom should maintain forts in an efficient condition, realizing that forts and strongholds alone mean the kingdom, the treasury, the strength of the army, the prosperity of the kingdom, our places of residence and resting places, nay, our very security of life.'

The last two sections of the chapter on forts are devoted to the building, equipment, garrisoning, and administration of these vital points. Considering their importance and value, it is pointed out, their upkeep and organization ought not to be neglected even in the slightest degree. 'On that account the life of the fort is the *Havaldar*; so is the chief *Sarnobat*. They must be chosen by the King himself, and must not be engaged on the recommendation or flattery of some one'. They should be selected for their valour, self-respect, industry, honesty, wakefulness and appreciation of the fort as the dearest treasure entrusted to them by their master. 'Similarly, the *Sabnis* and the *Karkhanis*, who are the promoters of the laws laid down by the King, and are the judges of all good and bad actions, and who are also high authorities like the *Havaldars* and *Sarnobats*, should act like them by making all act in the same way.' *Tat-sarnobat*, *Bargirs*, *Naik-wadi*, *Rajputs*, etc. should also be chosen with similar care. 'Persons who are appointed for service in the

forts should not be retained if they are addicted to intoxicating drugs or are unsteady, capricious, murderous and perfidious. Those who are to be appointed should be entertained only on assurance of their good character. Even then a *Havaldar* is to be transferred after three years; a *Sarnobat* after four years; a *Sabnis* and *Karkhanis* after five years.'

It is recognised that it is difficult to get reliable men to work in the forts. Yet, all kinds of precautions are recommended. 'If the workers are close relatives they should not be kept within the same fort. *Deshmukhs*, *Deshpandes*, *Patils*, *Kulkarnis*, *Chaugules* and other hereditary *Watandars* who occupy the territory round about a fort should not be given service in the forts near it. They should be employed five or ten villages away from their *watans*.' If this precaution is not followed they might either prove idle or betray to the enemy. If they are found guilty of any offence, they should be immediately punished without waiting for the termination of their term of office. Even if there should be the slightest suspicion of betrayal, the officer concerned should be at once removed even before the investigation starts. When he has come into the royal presence, he should be judged justly, and if the charge is proved against him he should be immediately beheaded, without showing any mercy. The punishment should be proclaimed by beat of drums as a deterrent. If, after proper and just investigation his innocence is established, he should be conciliated and care taken to see that no stigma attaches to him. He should not, however, be sent back to the same post.

The instructions in this behalf are clear, just, humane and cautious. The rule against employment of relatives in the same place is explained in a manner that appeals to common sense: 'If they commit any offence one feels constrained in punishing them. If proper punishment is not given, others find excuse to petition on their own behalf; and thus influence leads to the increase of influence, and the established laws are broken. This very thing is the cause of the ruin of a kingdom. For this purpose the breach of laws should not at all be allowed. The chief means for the protection of the kingdom are the forts.'

Equally detailed and interesting instructions are given about the choice of sites, materials, classes and modes of construction. Despite the length of the passage one feels tempted to reproduce it as a whole because of its importance. Besides, it is reflective of the practical character of the Maratha people who have such a genius for details : Forts should be built on sites carefully chosen in every part of the country, it says. There should not be any point, in the neighbouring hills, higher than the fort. If there is one, it should be brought under the control of the fort by reducing it with mines. If this were not possible such points should be occupied and strengthened. 'The building of the fort should not be undertaken only to meet a temporary need. Ramparts, towers, approaches by sap and mine, watches, outer walls, should be built wherever necessary. Those places which are vulnerable should be made difficult by every effort with the help of mines, and the weakness of the fort should be reduced by the erection of strong edifices. Gates should be constructed in such a way that they should escape bombardment from below, and they should have towers in front which would control egress and ingress. To have one gate to the fort is a great drawback. Therefore, according to the needs of the fort, one, two, or three gates and similarly small secret passages shohld be provided. Out of these only those that are always required for normal use should be kept open, and other doors and inlets should be built up....

'There are several classes of forts which can be built on every mountain. If there is a plain in front of the gate or below the walls of the fort, a deep moat should be dug and a seeond wall built mounted with guns to prevent the enemy approaching the moat. The approaches to the fort should not be easy of access. Besides this, secret paths should be maintained for escape in times of emergency. There should always be outposts round forts. There should be patrolling by sentinels of the environs of the fort. There should not at all be a strongly built house near below the fort, or a stone enclosure round any house.

'Likewise the water-supply must be assured. If there is no water, and if it becomes necessary to fortify the place, then by breaking the rock, reservoirs and tank should be

constructed if there is a spring. One reservoir alone should not be depended upon. For during fighting it might get dried up. Therefore for storing water two or three reservoirs ought to be constructed. Water from them should not be ordinarily spent. The water in the fort should be specially protected....

'Within the fort, excepting the royal residence, no well-built house should be constructed. The walls of the royal residence should be built of bricks thickly plastered with *chunam*. No cracks in the house should be allowed to remain where rats, scorpions, insects and ants would find a place. The compound should be thinly planted with *nirgudi* and other trees. The officer in charge of the fort (*Gadkari*) should not keep the house unoccupied because it is the royal residence....No rubbish should be allowed to fall on the roads, in the market place, or near the walls of the fort. By burning such rubbish and by putting the burnt ashes in the backyard, vegetables should be made to grow in every house. In order that all granaries and storehouses of military provisions in the fort should be free from troubles of fire, rats, insects, ants, white-ants, the floor should be paved with stones and *chunam*. Tanks (cisterns) should be made on cliffs of forts in places where there is black rock having no cracks. If there is even a small crack, it should be seen that, by applying *chunam*, no leakage takes place....

'The powder magazine should not be near the house.... Rockets, grenades and other explosives should be kept in the middle portion of the house. They should not be allowed to get damp. After every eight or fifteen days the *Havaldar* should visit it, and taking out powder, rockets, grenades and other explosives and drying them, seal them again after storing them. Guards should always be kept to protect the powder magazine....

'On all the vulnerable places in the fort, big and small guns, *charkyas* and other machines suitable for those places and also for higher places should be mounted on platform on every bastion and rampart wall at suitable intervals. The *charakyas* and big guns should be kept on gun-carriages after testing the weight of the guns and by giving them strong iron rings as supports.... tools for repairing the touch-holes

of guns and other things necessary for gun-firing should always be kept ready near the guns.... Grenades and rockets should be kept ready at every watch. The officer in charge who says that there is no enemy in the country and that when he comes he would get ready by bringing things from the storehouses, is foolish and idle. Such a one should not be entrusted with the work. He should act according to orders blindly and be alert even if there is no occasion; then when the real occasion comes there will be no danger,...

'In the rainy season, guns and doors should be besmeared with oil and wax, and by filling the touch-holes of guns with wax and by putting front-covers on guns sufficient for covering their mouths, they should be protected from being spoiled. All kinds of trees should be planted in the fort. In time of need all of them would serve as wood. In every fort Brahmans, astrologers, *vaidiks*, the learned, and physicians who are versed in mineral and herbal medicines, surgeons, exorcists, wound-dressers, blacksmiths, carpenters, stone-cutters, cobblers, etc. should be engaged in sufficient numbers. When there is no special work for them they should not be allowed to remain idle. They should be asked to do other work. In every fort salary, treasury, military provisions, and other kinds of articles necessary for forts should be collected and stored. While remembering that forts would not at all be useful in the absence of these arrangements, the administration of the forts should be carried on as detailed above.'

The navy was considered an independent limb of the State. 'Just as the King's success on land depends on the strength of his cavalry, so the mastery of the sea belongs to him who possesses a navy. Therefore a navy ought to be built.... Whatever naval force is created should be fully and well equipped with brave and efficient fighters, guns, matchlocks, ammunition, grenades and other materials of naval use.' Then follow instructions about organization.

'Every unit should contain five *gurabs* and fifteen *galbats*. Over all of them must be a *sar-subha*. All should obey him. For the expenses of the navy the revenue of a particular territory should be apportioned. *Commerce will be ruined if the expenses are defrayed out of the income derived from ports*,

and merchants will be troubled. Harbours should be well protected; otherwise, in cases of need articles of necessity cannot be brought from abroad. There would also be a loss of customs duties and other income.... Trade should be increased. Kolis and merchants should not be troubled. If any one gives them trouble, it should be warded off. Foreign ships without permits should be subjected to inspection. By taking them under control, by using conciliation and intimidation, without touching any of their goods, and by giving them an assurance of safety, they should be brought to the port. In many ways naval and territorial authorities should conciliate and encourage them to freely sell and purchase what they desire, after taking from the something by way of customs duties. If there is a great merchant he should be treated with special hospitality at government expense. An effort should be made to see that the foreign merchant feels assured in every way and attracted to enter into commercial relations with the kingdom. Hostile ships should be brought into port without any damage and the King should be informed about them.'

Skipping over the instructions regarding naval fights and tactics, we might refer to the rules for sheltering the ships. 'The navy should be sheltered every year in a different port which has a fort facing the sea....Then also the whole fleet should not be kept in one place, but distributed in various places. In the night patrolling, both by land and sea, should be done round about the fleet....With royal permission useful parts of teak and other trees which are in the forests of the kingdom should be cut and collected. Besides this whatever is necessary should be purchased and brought from foreign territories....Even when a tree is very old and not of much use, it should be cut only with the consent of its owner and after paying for it. Force should not at all be used.'

Lastly, we might consider the commercial policy as laid down in the *Adnapatra*. Merchants are described therein as the ornaments and glory of the kingdom. They are the cause of its prosperity. They bring goods from other lands, and lend money in times of need. There is a great advantage in the protection of merchants. For this reason the respect due to merchants should be maintained. On no account should

strong action be taken against them, nor should they be disrespected. By making them establish shops and factories in market towns, trade should be fostered in elephants, horses, rich silks, and cloth of wool etc., jewels, arms and all other kinds of goods. In the capital market great merchants should be induced to come and settle. They should be kept pleased with presents and gifts on special occasions. If they do not find the place favourable, they should be kept satisfied where they are, and by showing them kindness their agents should be brought and kept by giving them suitable places for their shops. Similarly, by sending an assurance of safety to seafaring merchants at various ports, they should be given the freedom of intercourse in trade.'

Very shrewd precautions about the Europeans are sounded. 'These hat-wearers (टोपीकर) are ambitious of increasing their territories and establishing their religion. Moreover this race of people is obstinate. Where a place has fallen into their hands they will not give it up even at the cost of their lives. Their intercourse should therefore be restricted to the extent only of their coming and going for purposes of trade. They should strictly be given no places to settle in. They should not at all be allowed to visit sea-forts. If some place has sometimes to be given for a factory, it should not be at the mouth of an inlet or on the sea-shore; they would establish new forts at those ports with the help of their navy to protect them. Their strength lies in their navy, guns and ammunition. As a consequence so much territory would be lost to the kingdom. Therefore, if any place is at all to be given to them, it should be in the midst of two or four great towns, eight to sixteen miles distant from the sea,—just as the French were given lands at Rajapur. The place must be such as to be low-lying and within the range of control of the neighbouring town, so as to avoid troubling the town. Thus by fixing their place of habitation, factories might be permitted to be built. They should not be allowed to erect strong and permanent houses. If they live in this way by accepting the above conditions, it is well; if not, there is no need of them. It is enough if they occasionally come and go, and do not trouble us; nor need we trouble them.'

The character of the Maratha achievements during the

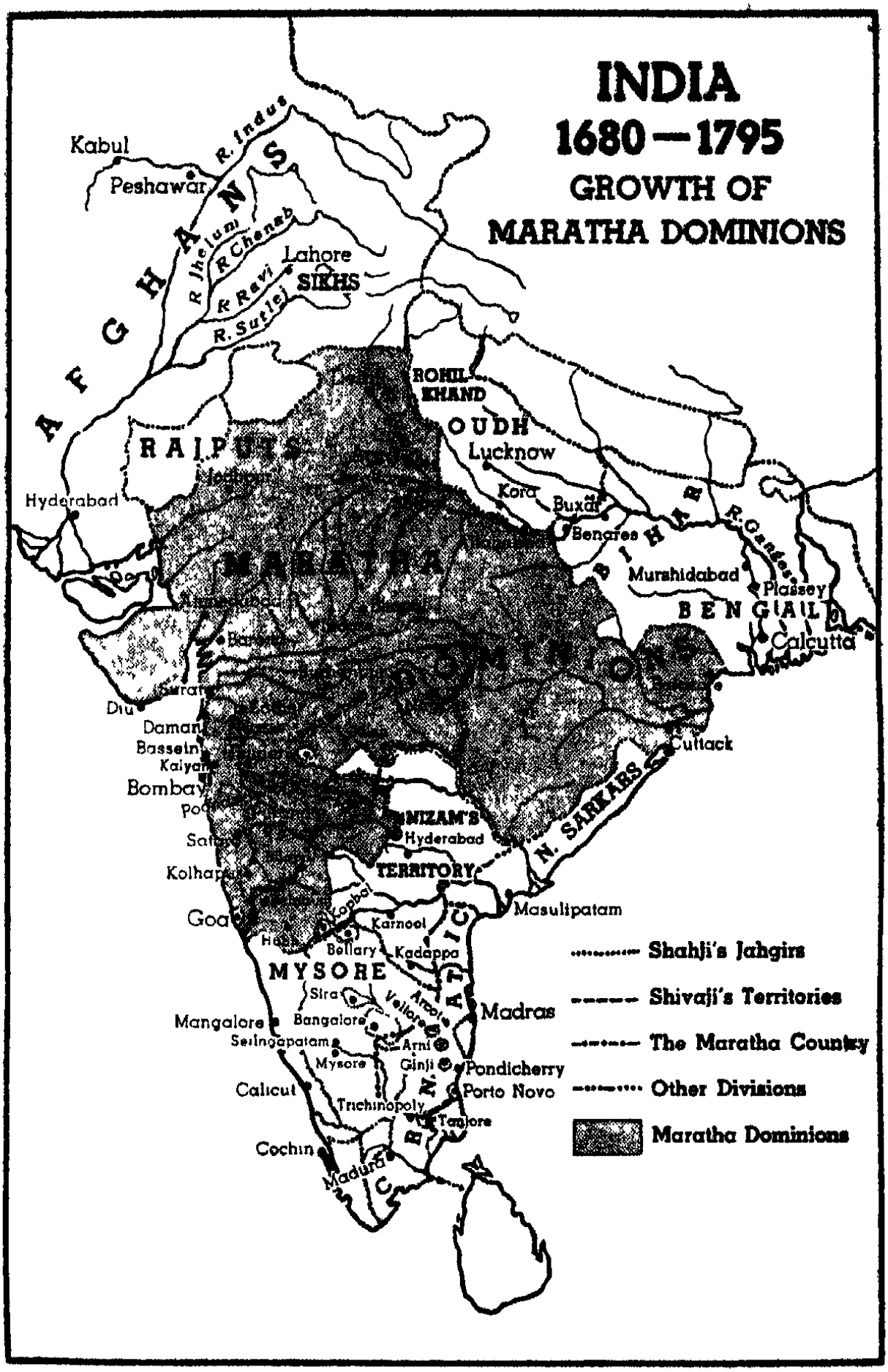
seventeenth century becomes clear from the above cited evidence. It was both a cultural and a political triumph. Its roots were in the moral character of the people. A down-trodden and long-suffering race had reasserted itself with vigour and liberated the land and culture from the throttling grip of the foreigners. In doing this they had also shaken the Mughal Empire to its foundations; they had made themselves the actual masters of their own homelands and the potential masters of the whole of India. They had created a new State and a New Order superior to any that had hitherto existed in Hindu India. Their idealism was noble and their organization sound : It was spotaneous, healthy, liberal, practical, and was the natural expression of the genius of Maharashtra, —in short, the concrete manifestation of *Maharashtra-Dharma.*

An ampler examination of all its phases and features must form the subject of an independent volume. It has evoked the admiration as well as criticism of scholars of repute in and outside Maharashtra. We might appropriately conclude this brief survey—based on objective and contemporary evidence—with the following observations of Sir Jadunath Sarkar who could never be accused of any uncritical admiration of the Marathas : Though he speaks in terms of Shivaji the individual, we have no hesitation in extending the application of his remarks to Shivaji's contemporaries whose contributions were not less important or less worthy of appreciation. Those who outlived him carried on his great work to its natural and grand culmination. The blunders of his successors should not blind us in the appreciation of the net achievements that stand indubitably to the credit of his people, especially during the seventeenth century.

Speaking of Shivaji, Sarkar writes : 'But the indispensable bases of a sovereign State he did lay down, and the fact would have been established beyond question if his life had not been cut short only six years after his coronation. He gave to his own dominions in Maharashtra peace and order, at least for a time. Now, order is the beginning of all good things, as disorder is the enemy of civilisation, progress and popular happiness.' Then he proceeds to point out that orde r is only a means to an end :'the next duty of the State is

to throw careers open to talents and to educate the people by creating and expanding through State effort the various fields for the exercise of their ability and energy—economic, administrative, diplomatic, military, financial and even mechanical' : all this was done by Shivaji. The third feature was freedom in the exercise of religion : 'though himself a pious Hindu he gave his State bounty to Muslim saints and Hindu sadhus without distinction, and respected the *Quran* no less than his own Scriptures'. Shivaji's political ideals were such that we can almost accept them even today without any change. He aimed at giving his people peace, universal toleration, equal opportunities for all castes and creeds, a beneficent, active and pure system of administration, a navy for promoting trade, and a trained militia for guarding the homeland. Above all, he sought for national development through action, and not by lonely meditation... Every worthy man, —not only the natives of Maharashtra, but also recruits from other parts of India,—who came to Shivaji, was sure of being given some task which would call forth his inner capacity and pave the way for his own rise to distinction, while serving the interests of the State. The activities of Shivaji's government spread in many directions and this enabled his people to aspire to a happy and varied development, such as all modern civilized States aim at.'

Such, in brief, was the nature of the Maratha achievement.


INDIA
1680—1795
GROWTH OF
MARATHA DOMINIONS
Kabul
Peshawar
R. Indus
AFGHANS
R. Jhelum
R. Chenab
R. Ravi
R. Sutlej
Lahore
SIKHS
ROHIL-
KHAND
OUDH
Lucknow
RAJPUTS
Hyderabad
Kora
Buxar
Benares
BIHAR
R. Ganges
MARATHA
Murshidabad
Plassey
BENGAL
Calcutta
Bassein
Diu
Daman
Kalyan
Bombay
Cuttack
N. SARKARS
NIZAM'S
Hyderabad
TERRITORY
Kolhapur
Goa
Kopbal
Karnool
Masulipatam
Bellary
Kadappa
MYSORE
Sira
Arcot
Vellore
Madras
Mangalore
Bangalore
Seringapatam
Arni
Mysore
Ginji
Pondicherry
Calicut
Porto Novo
Trichinopoly
Tanjore
Cochin
Madura
Shahji's Jahgirs
Shivaji's Territories
The Maratha Country
Other Divisions
Maratha Dominions

INDIA
IN 1805
AFGHANS
Kabul
Peshawar
KASHMIR
DERAJAT
SIKHS
Lahore
TIBET
CIS-SUTLEJ
SIKHS
BAHAWALPUR
Delhi
NEPAL
Laswari
Bharatpur
OUDH
Lucknow
RAJPUTS
Jodhpur
Ajmer
Jaipur
SIND
Gwalior
BIHAR
HOLKAR
SINDHIA
GAIKWAR
BENGAL
MARATHAS
Asirgarh
Gawilgarh
BHONSLA
Nagpur
Burhanpur
Balasore
Diu
Surat
Ajanta Hills
Assaye
Cuttack
Bassein
Salsette
NIZAM'S
Bombay
Ahmadnagar
Poona
PESHWA
TERRITORY
Satara
Hyderabad
Guntur
Goa
MYSORE
Madras
Calicut
Tanjore
COCHIN
TRAVANCORE
CEYLON
Approximate Boundaries
British Territory

CHAPTER XIII

THE BID FOR EMPIRE

> 'There are at present three great enemies to the state : Haidar Ali, Nizam Ali, and the English; but by God's grace they will all be subdued.'
>
> —PESHVA MADHAVRAO I

THE activities of the Marathas under Tarabai, widow of Rajaram, referred to by Khwafi Khan (cited before) were soon to be interrupted by the clever strategy of the Imperialists. When Aurangzeb died, and the Mughal princes were as usual engaged in a deadly struggle for the throne, they thought of securing themselves from Maratha incursions by releasing Shahu, son of Sambhaji, and using him as a counterpoise against Tarabai. It may be recalled that, after the execution of Sambhaji in 1689, his infant son Shivaji (later on called Shahu) and family were taken captive by the Emperor. The young Maratha prince had since been brought up at the Mughal Court in an atmosphere of luxury and ease. In the meanwhile Rajaram succeeded to his unfortunate brother's throne and carried on the struggle against the Mughals to some purpose, as we witnessed in the preceding pages. His death in 1700 had made no difference for the Maratha resistance, as Aurangzeb very soon realized. The son of Rajaram in whose name Tarabai carried on the struggle (1700-1707) was an imbecile called Shivaji II. Shahu, being the son of the elder brother, might be deemed to have had superior claims over his cousin. Moreover, even during the lifetime of Rajaram, that amiable prince, though actually ruling in his own right, had given expression to sentiments which made it appear that he was only acting as regent in the absence of Shahu, the rightful heir to the throne of Sambhaji. It was, therefore, a shrewd move on the part of Zulfiqar Khan when he suggested that Shahu released might prove

more helpful to the Imperial interests than Shahu captive at the Mughal Court. The calculation proved correct.

The entry of Shahu into the Deccan, in the middle of 1707, was an invitation to civil war. The intrepid Tarabai would not brook his intervention or take it lying down. She declared Shahu an impostor, and also asserted that her own son had in any case infinitely superior claims. But it was very soon patent that the issue could be settled only by force of arms. The imperious nature of Tarabai had already alienated several of her officers and ministers. Consequently, when the two armies met at Khed, in November 1707, the defection of Dhanaji Jadhav, Tarabai's commander, turned the tide in favour of her unwanted nephew. By the following January, Shahu occupied Satara where he got himself crowned, as a rival to Shivaji II. Here he ruled, or rather reigned as we shall presently see, during the next 41 years, 1708–49. They were years of internal discord and external aggrandizement for the Marathas : for, so long as Tarabai lived she would not remain idle, while the restless spirit of the Marathas found vent in their fateful northern drive under the Peshvas. Before we turn to the history of the expansionist movement, we might briefly notice the character of the discord within the Maratha State.

Maharashtra at this time was a house divided against itself. Not only was it split up into two antagonistic sub-states with Shahu at the head of one (at Satara) and Shivaji II, or really Tarabai, at the head of the other (at Kolhapur), but there were internal factions within each of these divisions. Rajaram at his death had left another widow (besides Tarabai) named Rajasbai. Her son, Sambhaji II, very soon succeeded in usurping power, putting Tarabai and her son into prison. This dissolute prince proved a source of perpetual trouble to Shahu, as he played into the hands of the astute Nizam, who tried to make capital out of the divisions within the Maratha ruling family. Ultimately, however, Sambhaji was reconciled to Shahu, in February 1731, largely on account of the inherent goodness of that monarch. By the treaty of Warna it was settled that Sambhaji should rule over the southern division of the Maratha kingdom—between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers—with Kolhapur as its

capital, and the northern parts should be considered the preserve of Shahu.

There were deadly feuds among the ministers and generals as well, but we cannot describe all of them here. One scandalous consequence of this was seen in the conduct of Chandrasen Jadhav (son of Dhanaji Jadhav who had gone over to Shahu at the battle of Khed). Though invested with the command of the army, in succession to his father, after Dhanaji's death, Chandrasen proved a traitor to Shahu and joined Tarabai. Later he intrigued with the Nizam and continued to act in perpetual hostility towards his own people. Other instances of Maratha factiousness are afforded by the feuds between the Peshva and the Pratinidhi on the one side, and the Peshva and the Senapati on the other. The latter ended in the overthrow of the Senapati (Trimbakrao Dabhade) by Bajirao, on 1st April 1731, at Dabhai in Gujarat. Dabhade's death on the battlefield was, however, regarded as retribution for his unpatriotic intrigues (like Chandrasen Jadhav's) with the Nizam.

Shahu's own household was not free from disruptive quarrels. There was no love lost between his two wives, Sakwarbai, the elder, and Sagunabai, the younger. Their jealousies came to a head when Shahu appeared to be reaching his end without leaving any heir of his body to succeed him. 'The elder queen,' writes Chitnis (Shahu's Secretary), 'without obeying the King, began to intrigue, and form a separate party with the Pratinidhi and Yamaji Shivdev, so that she might adopt a son of her own choice.' We need not follow the whole tale. Shahu himself, desirous of leaving the kingdom to a descendant of the Great Shivaji, and also bridging the gulf between himself and Tarabai (whom he still called "Aayee" or mother), decided on the adoption of Ram Raja a supposititious son of Shivaji II, who was preferred by Tarabai. To cut a long story short, Shahu died in the midst of these unedifying quarrels of his queens, on 15th December 1749; and Ram Raja was crowned Chhatrapati on 4th January 1750. When Tarabai discovered that the new prince, far from being a tool in her own hands, fell into the grip of the Peshva, she openly denounced him as a 'fake' foisted by herself on the credulous Shahu as a 'practical joke'!

'Next to the great founder Shivaji, Shahu played the most important part in the development of the Maratha State,' writes Sardesai. This verdict would be historically correct if we qualified it with : 'in the House of Shivaji', for the two Peshwas, Bajirao I and Madhavrao I were otherwise, better entitled to that description. Nevertheless Shahu did render a great service to the development of Maratha power. He provided the much needed unifying centre to the otherwise centrifugal State. Pious and benevolent in his private life, he exercised a wholesome personal influence on men and affairs in spite of his natural disinclination for outdoor pursuits. His greatest gift to his country was his discovery of the Peshvas and the patronage he bestowed upon them. Tarabai on the other hand, despite her vigorous and inspiring leadership in the earlier days of crisis, ultimately proved too sinister an influence and malevolent to the Maratha cause.

The Peshvas were ministers of the Chatrapati or Maratha Raja. In the time of Shivaji and his immediate successors the office was not officially hereditary, but it became so under Shahu. This was due to the personal relationship between Shahu and Balaji Vishvanath Bhat, the founder of this famous family of rulers. The character and capacity of Balaji and the peculiar circumstances of the country, favoured the rise of the Peshvas to power and renown. Like the Imperial house of the Mughals, the family of the Peshvas was fortunate in producing an able line of successors. But unlike the great Mughal Emperors, the Peshvas suffered from the curse of premature death. They suddenly emerged from the obscurity of Shrivardhan, a village in Janjira State, and became, within a few years, *de facto* inheritors of the political legacy of the great Shivaji. We shall study their careers chiefly from the point of view of the making of Modern India.

The first authentic reference to Balaji Vishvanath, found in the family records of the Peshvas, belongs to the year 1696. He was then Sabhasad of Prant Poona. From 1699 to 1702 he was *Sar Subahdar* in the same place, and next at Daulatabad between 1704-7. He distinguished himself in the civil administration as well as military affairs, being associated with the commander Dhanaji Jadhav. Having proved

himself of very great use to Shahu, and being instrumental in securing his release and return to Maharashtra, he naturally became the righthand man of the new Chhatrapati. At his coronation, in January 1708, Shahu conferred upon him the title of *Sena-karte* (maker of the army). Eventually he rose to be Peshva in 1713.

One of the first things Balaji was called upon to do, in the service of his Chhatrapati, was to secure the restoration of Shahu's mother to him, from the custody of the Mughals. She had been detained at Delhi as hostage for the good behaviour of her son, when Shahu was released in 707. If he went to the Imperial capital on that account, he could also get confirmation of the grant of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from those who were then in effective power at Delhi. The need for this arose on account of the counterclaims that Tarabai was pressing through her own agents with the Emperor and the kaleidoscopic changes that were taking place so rapidly in the north, as we have noticed elsewhere. Balaji Vishvanath was shrewd enough to back the winning horse. He supported the Saiyid brothers in their role of King-makers.

Khwafi Khan describes Balaji Vishvanath as one of the 'most intelligent generals of Raja Shahu'. He did not go to Delhi as a mere suppliant for the grant to Shahu. He was accompanied by Khanderao Dabhade, Santaji Bhosle and a force of 16,000 Maratha horse. But for these impressive reinforcements, the Saiyids may not have ventured to bring about the palace revolution as precipitately as they did. At the end of February 1719, they witnessed the tragic end of the Emperor Farrukh-siyar. The new puppet Rafi-ud Darajat rewarded the Marathas with all that Balaji demanded: Shahu's mother and family were released; Shahu was recognized as ruler of Shivaji's home dominions, including the possessions in Karnatak (Banglore, Tanjore, etc.); and he was allowed to collect *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* in the six *subahs* of the Deccan (i.e. Khandesh, Berar, Aurangabad, Bidar, Golkonda and Bijapur). In return for all this, the Marathas were expected to maintain a contingent of 15,000 horse in the service of the Emperor and maintain order in the Deccan.

It is needless to add, the Marathas were glad to have this opportunity.

It may be recalled that, during the last days of Rajaram, the Marathas had already commenced their depredations in those provinces. By the admission of the Imperial historian Khwafi Khan, under Tarabai's direction, they had spread their activities as far as Malwa and Sironj in Central India. Balaji had himself raided Gujarat soon after the death of Aurangzeb and levied a tribute of Rs. 2,10,000. Husain Ali, before he found it expedient to make friends with the Marathas, had realized how powerful the Marathas already were in the Deccan. The Imperial grants, therefore, did no more than regularise the *de facto* position of the Marathas. Nevertheless their recognition, or formal confirmation, by the Emperor was a great gain. It at once converted the Marathas from the status of mere marauders into authorized agents of the sovereign of Delhi. Furthermore, it made some difference when the wheel of fate turned again and another Emperor sat on the throne. When the astute and powerful Nizam-ul-Mulk became viceroy of Muhammad Shah, he would not leave the Marathas in any enjoyment of their gains. Yet the Marathas proved more than a match for him, as we shall see presently.

Balaji Vishvanath did not long survive his strenuous journey to Delhi. He returned in June 1719, and died on 2nd April 1720. But he had witnessed with his own eyes the rotten state of affairs in the heart of the Mughal Empire. The Marathas were very soon to make capital out of that experience. He had also rendered valuable services to Shahu in the settlement of his home affairs. He had either suppressed or brought round recalcitrant persons like Khataokar and Kanhoji Angre to the side of Shahu. The power of Tarabai was overthrown even in Kolhapur, by the support given to her rival Rajasbai and her son Sambhaji. He reorganized the finances, created a legitimate field in the Mughal provinces for the most turbulent Marathas to lay the foundations of a Maratha Empire, and thereby gave definite shape and direction to the chaotic inheritance of Shahu. More than anything else, he made the Peshva the most important officer and minister in the Maratha State. Out of sheer gratitude

Shahu appointed his youthful son Bajirao, who was then just twenty-years of age (born on 18th August 1700), as the next Peshva.

Bajirao juatified the choice by his extraordinary brilliance, and thereby earned for his own son, Balaji Bajirao, the title to succeed as the third Peshva. Shahu was thus unconsciously led into making that important office hereditary, against the wholesome contrary principle laid down by his grandfather Shivaji.* Aa a matter of fact, before his death, Shahu blessed Balaji Bajirao and assured him: 'We hope and believe that you will ably conduct the administration of this kingdom... Our blessings rest on you. Our successors will continue you in office.' We have already indicated how this benediction came to be fulfilled. Ram Raja, the adopted son of Shahu, placed himself entirely in the Peshva's hands repudiating his godmother Tarabai. By what is known as the 'Sangola Agreement' (1750), he bestowed large estates on Balaji Bajirao and his supporters. 'The new arrangements,' observes Prof. H. N. Sinha, 'bring out quite clearly one vital fact, and that is the unrivalled supremacy of the Peshva. He had crushed the Pratinidhi, conciliated Raghuji Bhosle, reduced the Dabhade to insignificance, disarmed Tarabai and had the King under his thumb.' Though Tarabai rebelled against this supremacy of the Peshva for a time and took possession of the prince by a *coup d'etat*, she very soon realized that the King was only a shadow and that all real authority was wielded by the Peshva. Hence she finally made friends with Balaji and swore in the temple of Jejuri (to wreak a woman's revenge upon the innocent Ram Raja) that the prince was really a foundling! But the ironical result was that that declaration only increased the importance of her

* It is to be noted that, however, even under Shivaji there were exceptions to the general rule or policy. Prof. R. P. Patwardhan observes: 'What with Shivaji was exceptional, and prompted by very special circumstances, became a matter of everyday occurrence. Officers came to be hereditary, and *vatana* and jagirs came to be bestowed on a lavish scale... Ranade recognises that the departure from Shivaji's principle 'was forced upon the Government of Shahu by the events that had preceded his accession to power.'

—Introd. *Rise of the Maratha Power*. (B. U. ed. 1960)

rival, the Peshva, and reduced the Chhatrapati to a contemptible phantom.

To appreciate how the Peshvas carved a niche for themselves in the temple of the great, we should go back to Bajirao I. The glory of the house of the Peshvas chiefly rests on two pillars: the personalities of Bajirao I (1720-40) and his grandson Madhavrao I (1761-72).

A great controversy centres upon the policy (or impolicy) of the Maratha expansion northwards. The alternatives were hotly debated at the Court of Raja Shahu. Shripatrao Pratinidhi tried to make out a plausible case in support of concentration in the south and consolidation of the Maratha position in the Deccan. But the young, impetuous and ambitious Bajirao strongly advocated immediately 'striking at the trunk' and bringing down the withered tree of the Mughal Empire at a single stroke, instead of wasting time in the leisurely business of 'lopping off the branches'—i.e. the provinces. The impressive simplicity of the metaphor, and the position already attained by the Marathas in the north, made the temptation irresistible. Bajirao soon gave evidence of his capacity to execute the bold plan his imagination had so ardently conceived.

Under his gifted leadership the Marathas were not launching any new venture. Shivaji's raids on Surat, Rajaram's sallies into Berar, Khandesh and Malwa, and the more recent achievements of Balaji Vishvanath, made Bajirao's proposal seem not only natural but inevitable. The Mughal Empire was fast evolving a political vacuum in North India, and the Marathas were drawn into its vortex with the momentum of a hurricane. Maratha generals had already paved the way for such a culmination.

There was, however, one great hurdle to be got over—the Nizam. He was too formidable to be ignored, and he bestrode like a colossus the path of Maratha expansion. Since the overthrow of the Saiyid brothers, in 1720, Nizam-ul-Mulk had grown in importance and power.* The Mughal

* For a fuller account of this episode see the author's *Mughal Empire in India*. (1941), pp. 728-749. Briefly, the Saiyid Brothers (Abdullah Khan and Husain Ali Khan of Barha) were scions of settlers from Mesopotamia who had been Indianized for generations. As 'King makers' they were

Emperor, Muhammad Shah, discovered that the Irani Nawab Vazir of Oudh (Saadat Khan) barked more than he could bite. Hence he relied more and more on the astute and capable Nizam-ul-Mulk. The Turani nobleman could nevertheless afford but partial protection to his Imperial master. This became evident from the results of his encounters with Bajirao on the one side, and the invasion of Nadir Shah, in 1738–39, on the other. He proved to be more astute as a diplomat than capable as a general. Bajirao worsted him twice on the battlefield at Palkhed in February 1728 and at Bhopal in December 1737, and by the conventions of Mungi Shevgaom and Durai Sarai, respectively, enforced the claims of Shahu.

The diplomatic manœuvres of the Nizam aimed at the division of the Marathas into two hostile camps: Sambhaji of Kolhapur *vs.* Shahu of Satara, and the diversion of Bajirao and his formidable avalanche of Maratha troops away from the Deccan where he was building up his independent power, whatever might happen to the Mughal Empire. He was therefore perpetually intrigueing with Sambhaji and Maratha generals like Trimbakrao Dabhade and Chandrasen Jadhav. At Mungi Shevgaom he was obliged to recognise the claims of Shahu to the *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* of the six *subahs* of the Deccan, and also to cease supporting Sambhaji. But though coerced on the battlefield, he never intended to act according to his undertakings. He shifted his capital from Aurangabad to Hyderabad in order to be at a safer distance from Maratha arms, and pretended to give Bajirao a free hand in his northern adventures. Actually he continued his occupation of creating a division in the ranks of the Marathas. Trimbakrao Dabhade, who was lured into these machinations paid for it with his life on the stricken field of Dabhai (in

serious rivals of the Turani party led by Asaf-Jha Nizam-ul-mulk at the Mughal Court. The former were called '*Hindustan-Zha*' or 'born in India' as contrasted with the Irani and Turanis who were 'foreigners.' The distinctive achievement of the Saiyid Brothers was to have got the hated *jaziya* (abolished by Akbar, but reimposed by Aurangzeb) finally removed. The Marathas became the staunchest supporters of the 'Hindustani Party' of the Saiyid Brothers in their political game. The Nizam became the most formidable enemy of the Marathas in the Deccan and left behind him a troublesome legacy to our times.

Gujrat), on 1st April 1731. Bajirao always struck swiftly and effectively on the battlefield. Shahu, at the same time, permanently secured Sambhaji for his vassal by the treaty of Warna, according to which he agreed to confine his interests of the region south of the Krishna-Warna junction, as stated before. The Nizam, on the contrary, drew upon himself another hammer stroke of Bajirao, at Bhopal in December 1737—as punishment for his failure to keep faith with the Marathas.

The events which led up to Bhopal may be briefly told. Nizam-ul-Mulk was at one time governor of Gujarat and Malwa. When he ultimately concentrated on the Deccan, he was obliged to withdraw even his deputies from those two provinces. Yet the new incumbents appointed by the Emperor did not find it easy to take up their assignments. Hamid Khan, the Nizam's deputy in Gujarat, for instance, still lingered in that province, and would not allow his successor to step in without a fight. The Marathas found the opportunity they wanted in these unseemly quarrels between the Imperial officers. The Dabhades and Gaikwads played a prominent part in establishing the Maratha hold in Gujarat. With Trimbakrao Dabhade's destruction by Bajirao in 1731, the Gaikwads-ancestors of the ruling house of Baroda-gained in importance. Pilaji the first of them, having been treacherously assassinated at an interview by the Mughal *Subahdar* in March 1732, his place was taken by his son Damaji Gaikwad. In 1736, the title of *Sena Khas Khel* was conferred upon Damaji for his service in the consolidation of the Peshva's power in Gujarat. That title is still borne by his successors today.

In Malwa, the Mughal administration was fast crumbling. Giridhar Bahadur, its Brahman Governor was overpowered and killed in battle by Bajirao's brother Chimaji Appa, on 8th December 1728. Eventually, when Raja (Sawai) Jai Singh of Amber was made Governor of Malwa by the Emperor, he proved too friendly to the Marathas. Through him Bajirao made important gains in Malwa, as a consequence of which the Maratha ruling houses of Dhar, Indore and Gwalior came to be founded, respectively, by Udaji Pawar,

Malharrao Holkar, and Ranoji Shinde, the generals of Bajirao in Central India.

In the meanwhile, Maratha troops were pouring into the neighbouring province of Bundelkhand as well. There a conflict was going on between the native Bundela chieftain Raja Chhatrasal and the Mughal general Muhammad Khan Bangash. Chhatrasal extended an invitation to Bajirao who was only too willing to go to his assistance. The Peshva opened his campaign in that province in November 1728 with a force of 25,000 horse. Failing to obtain reinforcements from the Emperor, the Khan was compelled to compromise with the Bundelas. He was allowed to withdraw, 'agreeing not to attack them again but to content himself with the tribute they formerly paid.' Chhatrasal compensated Bajirao by bequeathing to him a third of his territories and stipulating that Bajirao should look on his two sons as his own brothers, and engaging the Marathas and Bundelas in a perpetual offensive-defensive alliance. Bajirao left his Bundela estates worth 33 *lakhs* annually, in the charge of of Govind Ballal Kher (a Karhada Brahman) who presently became famous as Govindpant Bundela. He was the ancestor of the renowned heroine of the great Rising of 1857, Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi.

Jai Singh's complicity in the Maratha encroachments in Central India was sought to be counteracted by the Emperor with the dispatch of Muslim generals like Muhammad Khan Bangash and Saadat Khan. With his recent experience of the Marathas in Bundelkhand, Bangash was more anxious for peaceful negotiations than prepared to cross swords with them. Bajirao, too, would have liked to secure from the Emperor formal recognition of his right to collect *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from the provinces already occupied by him—Malwa and Bundelkhand—if not also his actual appointment as Governor of those *subahs*. With this end in view, he opened a friendly campaign in Rajputana, so that his demands might have the sanction of a Hindu confederacy for their enforcement in case of necessity. Sawai Jai Singh was already friendly towards him. The Rana of Udaipur, though somewhat tardy in his response, was cowed into acquiescence. Others were attracted by what appeared to them a Grand Alliance

of the Hindus for the overthrow of the Muslim Empire which was visibly tottering. The Mughal Emperor would have preferred peaceful concessions to a trial of strength with the Marathas, but for the extraordinary demands made by Bajirao. 'Starting with a request for the grant of the *chauth* of Malwa, and some cash to cover his expenses,' writes Dr. Dighe, 'the Peshva went on increasing his demands, till at last he asked for virtual control over Malwa, Bundelkhand, Bengal and the Deccan. This almost took away the breath of the Mughal Court.' The challenge could, therefore, be met only on the field of battle. But the effete Empire could find no general to match Bajirao.

In the first encounter, Saadat Khan boasted to the Emperor that he had driven the Marathas with heavy losses beyond the Chambal. Bajirao, when he received reports of this, decided to call the bluff at once. 'I was resolved,' he wrote to his brother Chimaji, in April 1737, 'to let the Emperor know the truth, to prove that I was in Hindusthan, and show him the Marathas at the gate of his capital.' Yet he desisted from destructive attacks on Delhi, though he plundered and singed its environs. The reason he gave was: 'An act of outrage, however, breaks the thread of politics. We therefore gave up the idea of burning the capital.... The chief thing to be noted is that the Emperor and Khan Dauran wish to make peace with us, while the Mughals are striving to defeat us, and Saadat Khan is at their head.' After a few skirmishes Bajirao withdrew from Delhi, but continued peaceful negotiations with the Emperor through his agents. When the Nizam, who was at that time at Burhanpur in the Deccan, heard of this situation, he resolved to march against Bajirao at once. For one thing, the Emperor appeared to be in dire need of his assistance; and secondly, it was opportune to strike at his deadliest enemy while he was yet far from home. Besides, all the resources of the Empire would be at his beck and call while Saadat Khan was already roused to his pursuit. He calculated that Bajirao could be easily caught between his own forces from the South and the other Imperial forces from the North. Nonetheless Bajirao triumphed against all his enemies, and thereby revealed his extraordinary military genius.

We need not enter into the strategy and tactics that led to the utter defeat of the Nizam near Bhopal. Its political importance lies in the convention of Durai Sarai which the Nizam was compelled to sign on 7th January 1738. By it he undertook to secure for the Peshva the whole of Malwa, together with the complete sovereignty of the territory lying between the Narmada and the Chambal rivers, besides Rs. 50 *lakhs* as war indemnity. Though all these were promises yet to be fulfilled by confirmation of the Emperor, as Dr. Dighe has correctly observed, 'The victory of Bhopal marks the zenith of the Peshva's triumphant career.... By defeating the confederate armies at Bhopal the Peshva established the supremacy of Maratha arms in India and announced the birth of a new Imperial Power.'

After such a brilliant victory, it is not a little surprising that Bajirao did not follow the Nizam to the capital and get immediate ratification of the convention. Instead of taking this obvious step, which was most necessary in view of the Nizam's past conduct, the Peshva frittered away his energies in punishing the Ahirs and the petty *raja* of Kotah, for their complicity with the enemy during the late war. This brought him, no doubt, some immediate cash to the extent of ten *lahhs* of rupees; but it was nothing compared with what he might have obtained from the Mughal Emperor. His presence in Delhi might possibly have also averted the holocaust which it was presently to suffer at the hands of Nadir Shah. But Bajirao chose to return to Poona, leaving his work in the north unfinished.

We have dealt with the Persian invasion and the havoc caused by it, in another place.* Thanks to the treachery of Saadat Khan, both the Nizam and the Emperor Muhammad Shah were taken prisoner by the invader. But the traitor did not live to witness the terrible consequences of his betrayal, for before that he took poison and died. Nadir Shah himself warned the Emperor: 'You are more particularly to beware of Nizam-ul-Mulk, whom, by this conduct, I find to be full of cunning and self-interested, and more ambitious than becomes a subject.' Bajirao, who was otherwise pre-

* See the author's *The Making of Modern India*, pp. 181-184.

occupied in the South, when these momentous events were happening in the heart of the Mughal Empire, awoke rather late to the danger. It was a stroke of temporary good fortune that Nadir Shah did not choose to remain in Hindusthan like Babur, to found a new dynasty and Empire. The 'trunk' of the Imperial tree which Bajirao set out to cut down at one blow had not been completely destroyed. It was to moulder on into the next century. Meanwhile, there were several unfinished tasks in the South for the Nizam and the Marathas to attend to. But Bajirao did not live to see them all completed, before his death, on Monday, 28th April 1740 (when he was still to complete his 40th year), at Raverkhedi on the bank of the Narmada.

Bajirao was a contemporary of Frederick the Great of Prussia. He died in the year of the latter's accession and attack on the hoary Austrian Empire. In their sense of opportunity and military capacity to achieve their objectives the two resembled each other very closely. In swiftness of action and resourcefulness in war, the Peshva proved himself the prototype of the Prussian monarch, who was senior to him by about twelve years. We shall assess the results of his policy in another chapter. His financial incapacity is also best discussed in the context of the ultimate failure of the Peshvas. But, by his personality and qualities of leadership, Bajirao deeply impressed his contemporaries. Deep Singh, the special envoy of the Raja of Jaipur described him as 'the only true leader of men among the Marathas.' With the exception of Bajirao, he found 'no statesman true to his word, trusted by his sovereign, beloved by his troops, and capable of shouldering heavy responsibilities.' The English discovered that 'treating with the Shahu Raja directly, as matters are circumstanced, would be to no purpose, as Bajirao's power is so firmly established that such a step would give him a jealousy that we were aiming at subverting his interests in these parts.' Despite his other acknowledged virtues, there is no gainsaying that Bajirao was too domineering, jealous of his rivals, inclined to overlook the permanent interests of the State whose destiny he was so powerfully shaping. His appreciative and even admiring master, Shahu, was not unfair or ungrateful to him when he declared : 'The

Peshva has done me real service only on one occasion—in repelling the Nizam. Otherwise his activities and conquests have been for self-aggrandisement.' Dr. Dighe, his latest critical biographer, has correctly judged him in terms of our national history: 'But with all his achievements Bajirao cannot be hailed as a great constructive genius fit to rank with Shivaji. He made no attempt to mould or reform the political institutions of his State in a way that would benefit his people permanently.'

One inevitable consequence of the northern expansion of the Marathas was that they had soon to shoulder responsibilities for which they were ill equipped. Few events in their crowded annals created such a deep stir among the Marathas, and the rest of contemporary India, as their defeat at the hands of the Afghan invader Ahmad Shah Abdali, in January 1761. To understand how this came about, and to appreciate its full significance, it is necessary to survey the entire situation in the country at that time and the place of the Marathas therein.

The major factors of the situation were : (i) that the great Mughal Empire which flourished so well during the previous century was fast and visibly crumbling, and (ii) that the Marathas were the only power that seemed strong and important enough to be able to take its place. But the unexpected turn in the fortunes of all the native powers at the close of the eighteenth century in India revealed the fact that, behind all their hectic activities, there were other forces silently yet surely preparing the country for a different destiny. These forces were partly internal to the native powers and partly external to them. The external forces were represented by the Europeans, the Portuguese, the French and the English largely. The Maratha expansion in the heart of the Mughal Empire in Hindusthan synchronised with the great duel between England and France for world supremacy. More surely than the Marathas superseded the Mughals, the English were overthrowing the French in all parts of the globe. In India the triumphs of Clive over Dupleix proclaimed the decisive ascendancy of the English over their French rivals. Dupleix died a disappointed man in 1763, the year of the treaty of Paris which closed the Seven Years'

War. By that time Clive had signalised his success by his historic achievement on the battle-field of Plassey in 1757. This was soon confirmed by Munro's epoch-making victory at Buxar, over the combined forces of the fugitive Nawab of Bengal (Mir Kasim), the Nawab of Oudh (Shuja-ud-daulah), and the fugitive Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II, in 1764. That culminated in the acquisition of the *Divani* by the English East India Company, in 1765, which was the beginning of British rule in India. The events leading up to the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761 should be read against the background of these more fateful happenings in other parts of India. It is not to be forgotten that, at the very moment when the fate of the Marathas was being decided on the field of Panipat (middle of January 1761), Pondicherry fell to the English. It was so thoroughly destroyed that 'not a roof was left standing in this once fair and flourishing city.' (Orme). Haidar Ali usurped power in Mysore during the same year (August 1761).

In spite of Bajirao's spectacular suceesses in the North, it must be conceded that there were good reasons for the Pratinidhi's anxiety over problems nearer home. We have already noticed the chronic troubles created by Tarabai. The internal rift caused by her selfish ambitions was not patched up until the famous Jejuri confession on oath, in 1752, that Ram Raja was only an imposter. Though this strengthened the Peshva's *de facto* power, it was not a happy position for the Maratha State to be in. Though Sambhaji II of Kolhapur had been reconciled to vassalship under Shahu, by the treaty of Warna (1731), he lived on till 1760, and certainly had superior claims to be Chhatrapati as against the spurious Ram Raja. The Nizam was constantly alive to his opportunities until his death in 1748. That was no small source of danger to the Maratha position in the Deccan. Bajirao, in his hurry to push on with his nothern ventures, had not liquidated this danger. When Nadir Shah left India in 1739, Nizam-ul-Mulk withdrew completely from Imperial politics and concentrated on the consolidation of his dominion in the South. It was his good fortune that, just at that time, his most formidable adversary Bajirao died suddenly and prematurely, in April 1740. His son and successor,

Balaji Bajirao (Nana Saheb) was still in his 'teens (born on 12th December 1721). The Marathas suffered another shock in the death of Bajirao's younger brother, Chimaji Appa, o n 17th December 1740. Born in 1708, this remarkable young man had proved a veritable prodigy, as well on the battle-field as in finance and statecraft. A brief review of his great contribution to the strength of the Marathas is the best means of indicating the seriousness of the loss brought about by his untimely death. It may be noted in advance that he was the father of the lad who led the Marathas to the Panipat disaster in 1761. More about Chimaji's equally precocious son, ill-starred Sadashivrao Bhau, later.

Chimaji participated in Bajirao's Gujarat and Malwa campaigns, where he distinguished himself. But his more important role was in the South. At the Court of Shahu, his principal function was to safeguard his brother Bajirao's interests again the assaults of his domestic rivals, during his prolonged absence from home. He was equally useful in the management of finance and other vital supplies to the far flung armies of the Marathas. Socially, he was instrumental in protecting Bajirao, even against himself, from the blunders he was about to commit in his infatuation for his Muslim mistress, Mastani. His other achievements were his honourable settlement with the Siddis of Janjira (1736), and the capture of Bassein (near Bombay) from the Portuguese in 1739.

The problem of the Siddis has already been stated in an earlier chapter. Shivaji and Sambhaji, in spite of their best efforts, had not been able to oust them from their island fortress. In addition to their geographical advantages, the Siddis were considerably strengthenend by their alliance with the Portuguese and the English. For a short while, however, this sinister combination against the Marathas on the west coast was neutralised by the rise of a 'Shivaji of the Seas'—the Maratha Koli captain Kanhoji Angre. The astute diplomacy of Balaji Vishvanath, the first Peshva, and the benign influence of Shahu had succeeded in enlisting the powerful Angre on the side of the senior Chhatrapati, in 1714. Bu t the death of Kanhoji, in July 1729, proved unfortunate for the Marathas. The dissensions among his successors,

Shekhoji and Sambhaji, paralysed the strength of the Angres as well as the Peshva. Bajirao's first efforts to subdue the Siddis were frustrated by the failure of the Angres to lend timely and effective support from the sea. But dogged perseverance in that important task, the valiant fight put up by Pilaji Jadhav under very trying conditions, and the clever diplomacy and skilled manœuvres of Chimaji Appa at the most critical time, saved the situation. The settlement with the Siddis, of 25th September 1736, was both honourable and advantageous to the Marathas. Consequently, the Siddis' 'power on the sea declined, and the Siddi became in all but name a tributary of the Maratha State.' (Dighe).

The capture of Bassein from the Portuguese, on 12th May 1739, by Chimaji Appa, is one of the shining episodes of Maratha history. The Portuguese were long settled on the west coast. Since their acquisition of Goa in 1510, they had steadily grown in power, until they were eclipsed by their European rivals. As stated before, in spite of mutually conflicting interests, the English, the Portuguese and the Siddis invariably acted in concert whenever the Marathas tried to oust them. To safeguard their position in Northern Konkan the Viceroy at Goa had appointed a 'General of the North' with his headquarters at Bassein. They provoked Maratha hostility by interference in their struggle with the Siddis, as well as by their persecution of the Hindus. Shivaji's success against the English at Khanderi-Underi, and the terror struck into the foreigners by the mighty Kanhoji Angre, were pointers to the potentialities of the Marathas in the matter of naval defence. Alive to these dangers and antecedents, the Peshvas decided to make a final effort to expel the Portuguese at least from Northern Konkan. The victory of Chimaji Appa, in his siege of Bassein in May 1739, was the climax and culmination of this policy. For details of that campaign the reader must look elsewhere. It was a grim struggle on both sides. Geography, national tradition and scientific equipment such as artillery, were all on the side of the Europeans. Yet sheer determination, resourcefulness, marvellous heroism and toughness of fibre, decided the issue in favour of the Marathas. During the last crucial moments of the assault, Chimaji was urgently called to the North by

Bajirao to meet the menace of the Persian invasion. But like Nelson, he 'turned the blind eye' to the order, for the time being. He clinched his triumph by floating the *Bhagawa Jhenda* from the battlements of Bassein, on 23rd May 1739. The magnanimity of the conqueror was seen in the terms of the Portuguese capitulation, just as his humility was reflected in his report of it to 'Shrimant Maharaj Shri Paramahamsa Baba' (Brahmendra Svami). The vanquished were assured a safe retreat, their churches in Bassein were guaranteed protection, and such of the Christians as chose to remain were granted immunity from interference in their religious practices. The English, much impressed with this victory, sent a mission to Satara, under Captain Gordon, as a result of which they secured the privilege of free trade within the dominions of the Chhatrapati (June 1739).

On account of this friendship, the English rendered valuable assistance to the next Peshva in the overthrow of the Angres. When Sambhaji Angre died, in 1739, he was succeeded by his illegitimate half-brother Tulaji who was challenged by Manaji (another natural son of Kanhoji). Balaji Bajirao took full advantage of their fratricidal conflict and supported Manaji. In the fight that ensued, their strongholds of Gheria (Vijayadurg) and Suvarnadurg were captured with the help of the English, and Tulaji was taken prisoner (1756). Thus one more thorn in the side of the Peshva was removed by the defeat of Tulaji. The Angres, since the death of Kanhoji, had played a very discreditable part in the defence of the Konkan. They were divided among themselves, shifty, sullen and undependable–inactive in petulence or treacherous out of spite.

Raghuji Bhonsle was yet another source of trouble for the Peshvas. He was a near relation of Shahu's and therefore appeared to safeguard the interest of the Chhatrapati from the encroachments of the Peshva. As a matter of fact, he wanted to secure the throne of Satara for his son, if possible through adoption. For that purpose he tried to install a friendly Peshva near Shahu, when Bajirao died in 1740. But foiled in his schemes, he was much embroiled with Balaji Bajirao, whose appointment as Peshva was embarrassing to him. Nevertheless he was a great warrior and had already

carved out a province for himself in Berar. Between 1739 and 1742, at Shahu's instance, he led an expedition into the Carnatic which brought him additional prestige. When Alivardi Khan usurped power in Bengal, in 1740, Raghuji saw in the consequent unsettlement caused in the eastern provinces his opportunity to push forward in that direction. At first through his deputy Bhaskarpant, and then personally, he succeeded in harrying those lands (1742-51) to such an extent that Alivardi Khan was obliged to come to terms with Raghuji. The English at Calcutta built the 'Maratha ditch' at this time to protect their settlement from Maratha incursions. Orissa was ceded to Raghuji, and an additional tribute of 12 *lakhs* of rupees was paid annually to him as *chauth*. The river Suvarnarekha was agreed to as the boundary between the Khan's and Raghuji's territories. Alivardi died in 1756.

Alongside of the above happenings we have to note, too, the activities of Raghuji in another direction. His expeditions were carried on in the West and North up to the borders of Malwa and Bundelkhand. Here he came into conflict with the Peshvas and their generals. Even in the time of Bajirao he had evaded co-operation and thereby incurred his wrath. Now when the new Peshva, like his great father, personally led campaigns in the North—in Malwa and Bundelkhand (1741-42)—Raghuji appeared still hostile. He even instigated the Gaikwad and Dabhade to attack the Peshva from the west, while simultaneously he would himself attack him from the east. But Balaji Bajirao proved more than a match for his adversary. Securing his hold on the two Central Indian provinces, he turned to Bihar and Bengal to counteract Raghuji's plans. Alivardi Khan welcomed the Peshva's intervention, and the Mughal Emperor yielding to the importunities of the Nawab of Bengal, agreed to finally cede Malwa and Bundelkhand to the Peshva if he should rid his eastern provinces of the depredations of Raghuji's armies. The Peshva, having inflicted a couple of defeats on Raghuji in the course of 1742, returned in triumph to his capital in June 1743. Owing to the good offices of Shahu, once again, Raghuji and the Peshva were reconciled. The boundaries of their North Indian possessions were carefully demar-

cated by the Chhatrapati. In July 1743, the Peshva received confirmation of the grants made to him by the Mughal Emperor. This increased his commitments and responsibilities in Hindusthan. For the Peshva bound himself thereby to maintain order up to the river Chambal, and to defend the Emperor against his internal and external enemies. Ranoji Shinde, Malharrao Holkar, and Yashavantrao Pawar were left in Central India as the Peshva's 'Wardens of the Marches.' From these developments to Panipat was not a far cry.

The Nizam alone appeared to stand between the Marathas and their Imperial destiny. Since the death of Bajirao, Nizam-ul-Mulk had to deal with the revolt of his son Nasir Jung whom he had left in charge of the Deccan during his last visit to Delhi. In this delicate task he even invoked the assistance of Balaji Bajirao, either because he had been chastened by his repeated defeats at the hands of the Marathas, or because he wanted to take no risks in his encounter with his own son. In return for this the Nizam paid the Peshva 15 *lakhs* of rupees in ready cash, besides promising to use his good offices with the Emperor in securing the *subahdari* of Malwa together with the payment of the 50 *lakhs* promised to Bajirao at Durai Sarai. While the Peshva was thus diverted once again to the North, the wily Nizam-ul-Mulk turned to the South in order to retrieve his position in the Carnatic which was technically his but had fallen to the Marathas under Raghuji Bhonsale, during his prolonged absence from the Deccan.

Reference has been already made to the Carnatic expedition of Raghuji Bhonsle at the instance of Shahu (1739-41). There were several petty nawabs in that region, between the Krishna and Kaveri rivers, Savnoor, Kadappa, Karnool, Trichinopoli and Arcot, who were nominally the vassals of the Nizam. In their neighbourhood were also Maratha rulers like the Rajas of Tanjore and Gooti. It was on account of conflicts between these Carnatic rulers, and the consequent danger to the southern Marathas, that Shahu's help had been invoked particularly against Chanda Saheb at Trichinopoli. Raghuji Bhonsle did his work only too thoroughly: swept the Carnatic clean of such booty as he could lay his hands on, making no

distinction between Hindu and Muslim, and took Chanda Saheb captive to Satara. In the wake of this Maratha invasion, the Nizam moved into the Carnatic with a vast force seeing that both the Peshva and Raghuji were thoroughly preoccupied in North India. His main objective was the recovery of Trichinopoli from the Marathas. This he did after a long siege, on 29th August 1743. Appointing Muzaffar Jang nawab of the *subah*, he made some minor settlements in the Carnatic and returned to the Deccan in October 1743.

Shahu, however, would not reconcile himself to this setback to the Maratha interests in the Carnatic. His inclinations were seconded by the ambition of Babuji Naik who had accompained Raghuji during the previous campaign in the Carnatic, and who was also the candidate for the Peshvaship sponsored by Raghuji. But he proved a ridiculous failure. Hence Sadashivrao Bhau, son of Chimaji Appa, was dispatched to take his place on 5th December 1746. This had the desired effect. In the course of a year of campaigning at the head of an army of 60,000 Marathas, this young man defeated the Nawab of Savnoor and Nasir Jang (son of Nizam-ul-Mulk) and completely re-established the lost prestige of the Marathas in the region between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers.

At this time the Marathas in the North were involved in a war of succession in Rajputana. Jai Singh of Amber (Jaipur), a great friend of Bajirao's had died in 1743. His two sons, Ishvar Sing and Madhav Sing, after a brief respite, came to a clash in 1746. At the instigation of Jagat Singh, the Rana of Mewar, Madhav Singh aiming at the *gadi*, attacked his elder brother Ishvar Singh. The Ranas of Mewar, Bundi, and Kotah supported him in this unjust war. Ishvar Singh therefore sought the help of Shinde and Holkar, in the name of his late father who was their great friend. The Marathas were not unwilling. They not only assisted Ishvar Singh, but severely punished the Ranas. This left a festering wound in that section of the Rajputs, which was aggravated by the events that soon followed.

The Maratha generals who went to the rescue of Ishvar Sing had done so for a consideration. The *Raja* had promised to pay them three *lakhs* of rupees for the service. The

unequal division of this remuneration led to an unseemly quarrel between Shinde and Holkar, which created a very embarrassing situation for the Peshva. Holkar thought of reimbursing himself by helping Madhav Singh who was prepared to pay him 65 *lakhs*! War between Shinde and Holkar was averted only by the timely intervention of the Pesva who personally went to Rajputana, in December 1747 to resolve this intricate tangle. Before he returned to Poona, on 9th July 1748, he had brought about a settlement between the two sons of Jai Singh on the one side, and the two Maratha generals on the other. Yet, no sooner was his back turned, than hostilities were renewed in Jaipur ; for Ishvar Singh would not fulfil the terms of the recent settlement. Holkar now intervened with greater justification on behalf of the injured Madhav Singh,. He was so successful that, as a consequence, Ishvar Singh sought refuge in suicide, in 1751. Madhav Singh, who finally got himself installed at Jaipur, rewarded Holkar with his *jagir* in Rampura (in Mewar territory) with which he had been compensated while his brother ruled. The entire episode left the Marathas in bad odour with the Rajputs. Nemesis followed in the wake of Panipat, ten years later.

In the meanwhile, events were fast moving towards chaos. Nizam-ul-mulk Asaf Jah died in June 1748, worn out by his Carnatic expedition, undertaken at the age of seventy-nine. Chhatrapati Shahu followed him eighteen months later, in December 1749. We described the situation in Maharashtra at the time of Shahu's death, in an earlier section. The succession of Ram Raja and the discomfiture of Tarabai, no doubt, left the Peshva apparently unrivalled at home ; but the entire burden of the State was now placed on his shoulders. The consequences of this on the fortunes of the Marathas were far-reaching. The full story of the problems created in the Deccan and Carnatic by the death of Asaf Jah is not strictly relevant to our present context. It is narrated, in connection with the Anglo-French struggle, in another part of this book. To a large extent it proved immediately advantageous to the Marathas. Ghazi-ud-din Khan, the eldest son of the late Nizam who was at Delhi, acting as his father's deputy at the Imperial Court, was friendly to the

Marathas. His younger brother, Nasir Jang, had succeeded to the *gadi* at Hyderabad, but he was not destined to live long. On 16th December 1750, he was shot dead by the Pathan chief of Karnool, a partisan of his nephew and rival Muzaffar Jung, during his visit to the Carnatic. His successor, Muzaffar Jang, too, met with an identical end, on 13th February 1751. The viceroyalty of the Deccan was then secured by Salabat Jang, the third son of Asaf Jah. But the Peshva opposed his succession, as he wished to place Ghazi-ud-din Khan, his friend and ally, on that important *gadi*. He could certainly do this with justification, as his protege was the eldest son of Asaf Jah. But before this could be realised, Ghazi-ud-din was poisoned by his step-mother, on 16th October 1752, within seventeen days of his arrival at Aurangabad.

Though the Peshva thus failed to place Ghazi-ud-din in Hyderabad, he nonetheless made important gains by his intervention. An armed clash with Salabat Jang, despite the support of the French under Bussy, resulted in the Peshva being bought off by the cession of Khandesh, Baglana and other lands worth two *lakhs* of rupees annually in Sangamner and Jalna :sub-division, besides tribute from the Carnatic and Hyderabad. In return for all this the Peshva helped Salabat Jang in the reduction of the rebelious Nawab of Bankapur and Savnoor in Western Karnatak and pledged himself to defend the Nizam against all his enemies. But the conditions in the Nizam's dominions were so bad, that the Marathas could not for long resist the temptation to exploit them. Throughout his regime, Salabat Jang was a mere puppet in the hands of his successive regents (Shah Nawaz Khan, Bussy, and Nizam Ali) who ruled the State, while the intrigues of his courtiers, and the mutinies of his unpaid soldiery paralysed the administration. (C. H. I. IV, p. 388). Shah Nawaz Khan was murdered, Bussy was recalled by Lally, and Nizam Ali became the dictator, in June 1759.

In November 1757, the Peshva's son Vishvasrao had invaded the country east of Aurangabad. In January 1758, Nizam Ali attacked the Peshva near Sindkhed but wascompelled to accept terms under which the Marathas gained 2½ million rupees' worth of land and the fort of Naldurg. The

recall of Bussy by Lally occasioned by the increasing pressure of the English in the Carnatic, considerably weakened the Nizam. His able artillery officer, Ibrahim Khan Gardi, was won over by the Peshva. In November 1759, Sadashivrao Bhau occupied the important stronghold of Ahmadnagar by a stratagem, as a preliminary to his invasion of the Nizam's territory in force. In the January following, a vast Maratha army led by the Bhau, Raghunathrao and Ibrahim Khan Gardi, fell upon Nizam Ali and Salabat Jang, at Udgir. Being overpowered, the Nizam's army retreated to Ause and met with total disaster. All the commanders and most of the men were killed, and the Nizam was once again obliged to make peace. Territory yielding six millions of rupees annually was ceded in the province of Aurangabad with half of Bijapur and Bidar, including the fortresses of Burhanpur, Asirgarh, and Daulatabad. Only Hyderabad and some parts of Bijapur and Bidar alone remained in the hands of the sons of Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk I. "This was the apogee of Maratha success. Nemesis came at Panipat within one year..." (C.H.I.)

In the light of the achievements so far described, it should not be difficult to understand how the Marathas came to be the paramount power in India towards the middle of the eighteenth century. The English who were to be their successors were yet to emerge into prominence. The significance of their victories at Arcot (1751) and Wandewash (1760) in the South, and at Plassey (1757) and Buxar (1764) in the North, was not and could not be fully grasped by contemporary Indians. No prophet could foresee that the Marathas, like the French, would be eclipsed by the English before very long. Hence the Peshvas and their generals, elated by their continued successes in all parts of the country, naturally regarded themselves as the political heirs of the Imperial Mughals. Before they could fully realise the implications of that burden and responsibility they found themselves engaged in the Punjab for a crucial test.

In the wake of Nadir Shah's assassination in 1747, more surely than Babur claimed to be the successor of Timur, Ahmad Shah justified his Indian invasion as the heir to

Nadir Shah.* Whatever the pretext, the trail blazed by the Turki, Mughal and Irani adventurers, leading into the rich plains of Hindusthan, was too tempting to be forsaken. Consequently Ahmad Shah led a series of expeditions into the Punjab commencing in 1748. He met with a reverse on his first raid, but with the pertinacity of Babur he discovered the road to a stunning victory, though with very different results. The Emperor Muhammad Shah died in the year of his first incursion. Ahmad Shah, the next Mughal Emperor, provoked the Durrani, but failed ultimately to withstand him. In 1751, the Emperor, on the advice of Safdar Jang (Nawab Vazir of Oudh), invited the assistance of the Marathas, for the suppression of the Bangash Afghans (Rohillas) who had revolted in the Doab. The Marathas performed their task with a ruthlessness that earned for them the perennial hatred of the Rohillas. Yet, for the time being, they felt encouraged by the grant of half of Rohilkhand, as reward for their services, which they proudly held until the Panipat disaster (1761).

Ahmad Shah Abdali irrupted once again, at the close of 1751, but was bought off by the nerveless Emperor in panic, with the cession of the Punjab and Multan. Perhaps he had good reason, for the civil war which soon overtook Delhi revealed the inherent weakness of his position. This strife arose from the rivalry between (the Irani and Shia) Safdar Jang and (the Turani and Sunni) Ghazi-ud-din II. The latter was the able but violent and thoroughly unscrupulous son of Ghazi-ud-din who was murdered at Aurangabad for attempting to secure his inheritance as the eldest son of the Nizam. He forced himself on the Emperor and deprived Safdar Jang of most of the high offices he had held. He next used the Marathas under Malharrao Holkar to depose, blind, and destroy the hapless Emperor Ahmad Shah himself, on 2nd June 1754. A son of Jahandar Shah was raised to the throne

* Refer to *The Making of Modern India*, pp. 184-185. Nadir Shah was assainated in 1747-eight years after the returned from India. Ahmad Shah Abdali or Durrani was one of his most trusted Afghan generals. After making himself master of Kabul and Kandahar, he made several incursions into Western Punjab (like Babar) culminating in the battle of Panipat [1761].

as Alamgir II. This reckless adventurer then meddled in the Punjab, which though ceded to the Abdali was seething with trouble. His intervention provoked Ahmad Shah to another incursion. He entered Delhi on 28th January 1757, and before returning to Afghanistan a month later, married a widow of the late Emperor Muhammad Shah, took a Mughal bride for his son Timur Shah, and plundered the holy city of Mathura. Ghazi-ud-din, nevertheless ingratiated himself with the invader, and continued to dominate the Emperor. He finally found cause to remove Alamgir II, as he had his predecessor, and put a new puppet on the throne with the title of Shah Jahan II, in 1759. The son of the deposed Emperor, Ali Gauhar, having proved hostile to Ghazi-ud-din, sought refuge in exile.

The Marathas were no merely idle witnesses of all these kaleidoscopic happenings. Malharrao Holkar and Raghunathrao, the Peshva's brother who had lately made his mark in his campaigns in Rajputana and the Punjab, were the active allies of Ghazi-ud-din. A letter from the Peshva, dated 21st March 1759, directed his generals in the North to support anyone who should pay them 50 *lakhs* of rupees and promise other territorial gains. Raghunathrao had already occupied Lahore (in April 1758) and driven away Timur Shah Abdali. To punish this impertinence, Ahmad Shah again crossed the Indian border, in August 1759, pushing back the Marathas towards Delhi. There he was infuriated at the news of the murder of Alamgir II. On 9th January 1760, he slew Dattaji Shinde in an encounter at Barrari Ghat (10 miles north of Delhi). On 4th March Malharrao Holkar was routed at Sikandarabad by the Afghan general Jahan Khan. The news of these disconcerting reverses reached the Peshva in the Deccan while the Marathas were still rejoicing over their triumph at Udgir. Consequently it was decided to send effective reinforcements post-haste to the North in order to save Delhi from the Afghan menace and recover their lost hold on the Punjab. Sadashivrao Bhau, with the lustre of his recent victories in the Carnatic and Deccan, was elected to lead the expedition, in supersession of the superior claims of his cousin Raghunathrao who was senior to him. This culminated in the fateful battle of Panipat which dealt a

severer blow to the prestige of the Marathas than they had ever suffered before.

The Peshava's orders to Sadashivrao were: 'You must destroy the enemy finally and hold all the territory up to the Indus.' We cannot follow his itinerary in the execution of this mandate, but must rapidly sketch the events leading up to the tragic end. Though in the beginning things appeared to go well with the Marathas, a series of blunders on the part of Bhau, and the cool and consummate tactics of the Durrani, equally contributed to a finale undreamt of by the Peshva. Bhau reached Delhi on 23rd September 1760; the end came on Wednesday, 14th January 1761. As in the first Battle of Panipat (1526), when Babur won his decisive victory over Ibrahim Lodi, so this time too action started in the early morning and fighting went on till about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. There is no unanimity in the estimates of the combatants and the casualties. Nevertheless it will be correct enough to assume with Sir Jadunath Sarkar that the Afghans had a numerical superiority of about 15,000 combatants over the Marathas (60,000 against 45,000). But if we include the camp followers, the commissariat as well as the women who accompanied the fighters, the Marathas far outnumbered their enemies. Hence in the slaughter that ensued, on the battlefield as well as outside, the total casualties of the Marathas were staggering. About 28,000 died in action, 22,000 were taken captive, and 50,000 more were slaughtered during their flight! 50,000 horses were captured 'either by the Afghan army or the villagers along the route of flight.... they came like droves of sheep in thousands.' According to Professor Shejwalkar: 'The loss on the Afghan side can be estimated at some 20,000, practically all dying on the battle-field. Three-fourths of this number were possibly the Indian Ruhelas, the rest being Afghans and other foreign allies.'

Out of the holocaust, about 50,000 Marathas succeeded in extricating themselves. But, alas! among them were not Sadashivrao Bhau, Vishvasrao (the Peshva's son), Ibrahim Khan Gardi (the artillery expert trained under Bussy and won over from the Nizam's service by the Peshva), and Samsher Bahadur (a son of Bajirao by his charmer Mastani).

Malharrao Holkar, Mahadji Shinde and Nana Fadnavis were among the notables who escaped alive. They were destined to play a very important part in the momentous happenings during the rest of the century. But there is little exaggeration in the remark of Sir Jadunath Sarkar that 'an entire generation of leaders (of the Marathas) was cut off (at Panipat) at one stroke.' Balaji Bajirao the Peshva, himself died of the shock, on 23rd June 1761, at Parvati in Poona.

Hot controversies have raged round the allocations of blame for this disaster. Pre-eminently the responsibility rested on Bhau and the Peshva, though others might be implicated secondarily. Malharrao Holkar is charged by some scholars with betrayal at a crucial moment. Others would blame Ibrahim Khan Gardi for his dogged faith in his artillery which pinned down Bhau to a suicidal blunder in tactics. Veterans like Suraj Mal Jat and Malharrao Holkar had warned Sadashivrao against the dangers of entrenched warfare to which the Marathas were unaccustomed. The Jat general had even offered to provide in Bharatpur an advantageous base of operations for the traditional guerilla tactics of the Marathas in which they were pastmasters. But Bhau was obdurate and overbearing. He alienated his advisers by his arrogance, even as he had antagonised the people of the surrounding regions by his ruthless exactions. To meet the cost of his vast unmanageable army, he had gone the length of tearing out the silver ceiling of the Diwan-i-Khas at Delhi, with which he coined money to pay his troops! Even so he had to make desperate demands for money from home, which never came. Lastly, overconfident of himself and his strategy, he occupied a position far away from his base of supplies, and allowed Abdali to get in between himself and Delhi. This proved the ruin of the Marathas. They went into battle without rations and then confessed to the enemy (counting upon his chivalry?) that the cup of their miseries was full to the brim and there was no room for a drop more!

Abdali had arrayed his forces well. They were better disciplined and more compact. When there was nervousness among some of his officers over the initial successes of the Marathas, Abdali was unperturbed. 'Military operations must not be precipitated,' he declared; 'you shall see how

I manage this affair and bring it to a successful conclusion.' Kashi Raj, the Maratha observer in Shuja-ud-daulah's camp, remarks: 'Ahmad Shah's orders were obeyed like destiny, no man daring to hesitate or delay one moment in executing them.' Moreover, he had won the Muslims of North India to his side, making the war appear a *Jihad* against the infidels. Najib Khan, the Rohilla, was an implacable enemy of the Marathas, and he had joined—nay, invited—the invader. Shuja-ud-daulah (suceessor of Safdar Jang who had died) was vascillating, but was persuaded to join the Afghan despite his inherited predilections against Najib Khan. Nevertheless he did not actively participate in the battle but assisted the Marathas during their rout. Suraj Mal Jat, too,had kept away (because of tactical differences with Bhau), and yet he gave shelter to most of the beaten Marathas who needed food and nursing. Even the victor Adbali wrote a letter of sympathy to the Peshva over the catastrophe that had overtaken his men.

While all are agreed on the enormousness of the military disaster, the political inferences drawn therefrom by scholars have differed very widely. Vincent Smith described this as "a conflict far more determined than either of the battles fought on the same ground in the sixteenth century." The results of Panipat (1761), in the estimation of Sir Alfred Lyall, "were quite disproportionate to the magnitude of the exploit." It may well so appear, as the invader retired into Afghanistan after this futile holocaust, nominating Ali Gauhar, who was in exile, as Emperor Shah Alam II with Ghazi-ud-din as his *Vazir*. Sadashivrao Bhau had, before his fall, raised Mirza Jawan Bakht (son of Ali Gauhar) to the throne in place of Ghazi-ud-din's last puppet Shah Jahan II. Ali Gauhar (Shah Alam II) crowned himself, in his exile at Allahabad, and chose Shuja-ud-daullah as his *Vazir* (instead of the hated Ghazi-ud-din). He could not, however, return to his capital until 1772, and then only as a protege of the Marathas. As Sarkar has observed: "From 10th October 1760, when Sadashivrao Bhau deposed the Vazir's puppet Shah Jahan II and proclaimed Shah Alam II (Jawan Bakht?—E. &. D., VIII, p. 278) Emperor in Delhi, to the 6th January 1772, when Shah Alam rode into the capital of his fathers

for the first time as sovereign, the Imperial city was widowed of her lord," During this interval, until his death, on 31st October 1770, Najib Khan was dictator at Delhi and "supreme regulator of the affairs of what still remained of the Mughal Empire."

It is clear from the above that, although an Emperor still existed "somewhere in the Mughal Empire", he could not enter his own capital for over eleven years. When he was reinstated at Delhi in January 1772, it was by the power of the Marathas. Yet the *Shorter Cambridge History of India* categorically asserts : "all hopes of a Maratha Empire were destroyed at Panipat." (p.478). Smith quotes with approval Elphinstone's remark that "the confederacy of the Maratha princes dissolved on the cessation of their common danger". (O.H.I., p.465, 2nd ed.). Sarkar seems to fall into line with these opinions when he writes : "Since the days of Vishwanath K. Rajwade, it has been the fashion with Maratha writers to belittle the result of the battle of Panipat as no disater to the Marathas except for the death of so many chiefs and so many thousands of soldiers... But a dispassionate survey of Indian history will show how unfoundcd this chauvinistic claim is." But he gives away his case when, in the very next sentence, he admits that the Marathas restored Shah Alam II to Delhi in 1772, and that the "proud position" of being "king-maker" and "dominator of the Mughal's empire and the real master of his nominal ministers and generals", was secured by Mahadji Shinde in 1789. (*Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. II. pp.354–5). The fact is that the Marathas showed considerable resilience in the face of Panipat, and rapidly recovered from its shock, under the very next Peshva Madhavrao I(1761-1772). Until their power was broken by the superior might of the English, as the century closed, the Marathas continued to be pre-eminent in India.

'There are at present three great enemies to the State,' wrote the precocious Peshva Madhavrao I, in July 1762, 'Haidar Ali, Nizam Ali, and the English; but by God's grace they will all be subdued.' It was then hardly a year since he had been made Peshva at the age of seventeen. Naturally, his uncle Raghunathrao was appointed Regent until Madhavrao should come of age. Before his premature death, on 18th

November 1772, as Strachey remarked, 'the Marathas now seemed to have become as formidable as before the disaster of Panipat.' If they failed to make the best use of that revived opportunity to found a lasting Maratha dominion in India, it was *not* due to the effects of Panipat, but to more inherent causes that manifested themselves independently of that great debacle. Contemporary English observers understood the secrets of the Marathas better than the 'dispassionate' critics of Maratha 'chauvinism' today. They noted on 30th April 1770: 'It has always been allowed, and that too with just reason, that nothing can reduce the Maratha power but dissension among themselves, and it is fortunate for the other Powers of Hindusthan that the Maratha Chiefs are always ready to take advantage of each other.' This fatal weakness was not imparted to them by Panipat. Phœnix-like, they rose to pre-eminence once again out of the ashes of Panipat during the all too short regime of Madhavrao I (1761-72).

These eleven years were full of warlike and diplomatic activities. Far from being disheartened by the losses suffered by them at Panipat, they seemed determined to wipe out its sad memories by fresh achievements. In this they succeeded to a very remarkable extent. Of the three great enemies envisaged by the young Peshva, the Nizam, Haidar Ali and the English, the first two were more than humbled, the conflict with the English was not yet open, and it remained to be settled after the death of Madhavrao. The first Anglo-Maratha War began only three years later (1775–82). Though some of the happenings were synchronous, it will be convenient to consider the history of this period in four parts: (i) Maratha relations with the Nizam; (ii) Maratha conflict with Haidar Ali; (iii) Diplomatic relations with the English; and (iv) Maratha recovery in the North. Other aspects like the intrigues and recalcitrance of Raghunathrao and the administrative improvements effected by Madhavrao, may be reserved for later treatment.

The Nizam was the first to take advantage of the Maratha disaster at Panipat. He found in that calamity of his enemies the best opportunity to wipe out his own shame and losses at Udgir. Salabat Jang was now totally eclipsed by

his brother Nizam Ali, who at once set about mobilising all the forces that were likely to be of use to him against the Peshva. These included Maratha chiefs like Murarrao Ghorpade, Hanumantray Nimbalkar, Ramchandra Jadhav and Janoji Bhonsle; the nawabs of Karnool, Kadappa and Savnoor, and the English as possible allies. He started military action with a devastating campaign, and marched towards Poona with an army of 60,000. Unfortunately, he concentrated too early on the destruction of Hindu temples *en route*, and thereby alienated his Maratha allies. The result was a decisive victory for his enemies, in January 1762. The treaty that the Nizam was forced to sign might have been more favourable to the Marathas but for the unpatriotic impulses of Raghunathrao, the regent. 'It is enough to say,' writes A. C. Banerjee, 'that Raghunath wanted to secure a potential ally in his struggle for power at Poona, and tried to conciliate Nizam Ali by undeserved leniency.'

Apart from the above betrayal of his interests, Madhavrao had cause for great dissatisfaction with his uncle. Matters soon came to a head between them, as between Akbar and Bairam Khan (though the latter was more loyal to his master than Raghunathrao to the young Peshva). By September 1762 the regent had thrown himself into the arms of the Nizam by running away to Aurangabad. Civil war thus became inevitable. On 12th November, the young Peshva, suffering from fever, and betrayed by some of his officers such as Sakharam Bapu, was compelled to submit to his designing uncle. Seeing that Nizam Ali and Janoji Bhonsle were marching to reinforce Raghunathrao's forces, Madhavrao surrendered, and averted a great disaster to the Maratha State. For the time being Raghunathrao was won over by tact, but the Nizam and Janoji Bhonsle could not be forgiven for the part they had played in this domestic crisis.

Internal divisions within the Maratha camp soon provided another opportunity to the Nizam to play his old game. Those that had sided with the Peshva in the late struggle included the chief of Miraj. When Raghunathrao besieged Miraj with a view to punishing him, he did not hesitate to appeal to the Nizam for help. Starting on his second cam-

paign against Poona, Nizam Ali made preposterous demands from the Peshva to find a *casus belli*, in February 1763. Madhavrao who was away in the Carnatic hurried back and joined his uncle. Nizam Ali's designs against Poona were foiled by a counter-attack on Hyderabad, and he was compelled by this manœuvre to retreat for the safety of his capital. The opposing forces met at Rakshasbhuvan on the Godavari, on 10th August. Madhavrao played a very active part in the decisive action which followed and elicited encomiums even from his jealous uncle. 'He surprised me,' wrote Raghunathrao to the Peshva's mother; 'he had never before seen a fight. I have confidence in his future management of responsibility.' The Nizam's defeat was so severe that he was once again compelled to make a humiliating surrender. Raghunathrao was inclined to be lenient as before, but the Peshva insisted on the surrender of territories (worth 60 *lakhs*) ceded at Udgir, in addition to other districts yielding 22 *lakhs* annually. The treaty was signed on 25th September 1763. So abiding was the lesson of this victory that the Nizam never again seriously challenged the might of the Marathas for thirtytwo years. When he did so, at Kharda in 1795, the verdict in favour of the Marathas was reconfirmed though they were not destined to profit by it, as we shall notice later. The biographer of Madhavrao* has justly observed: 'This treaty (of 25 September 1763) deserves to be regarded as a landmark in the history of the Marathas....As a contemporary news-writer observed, this brilliant success impressed the Deccan as well as Hindusthan. This was indeed the proclamation of Maratha revival after the disaster of Panipat. Finally,...it closed the period of Raghunathrao's regency and marked the beginning of Madhavrao's independent career. It became clear to all that, in spite of his lack of experience, this young ruler was great alike in war and in diplomacy, and possessed to the fullest degree those qualities of leadership which his uncle totally lacked.' Madhavrao's dealings with Haidar Ali and the English testify to the correctness of these remarks.

Haidar Ali's usurpation of the throne of Mysore (August

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* A. C. Banerjee—*Peshva Madhavrao I*, Calcutta, (1943).

1761) has been alluded to before. From the rank of an ordinary *Naik* in the army of the Hindu *Raja* of that State, he had made himself the most powerful Sultan, next only to the Nizam, in the South. While the Nawab of Arcot had become a tool in the hands of the English, and the Nizam was oscillating between the French and the English for support, Haidar was dreaded by the English on the one side and the Marathas on the other. Here we are primarily concerned with his contest with the Marathas, which, however, only served to establish the superiority of their power under Madhavrao. Between 1764 and 1772 four expeditions were led against Haidar by the Marathas, in all of which the Sultan was defeated and the balance of power lay with the Peshva.

The conflict with Haidar started out of Baramahal which the usurper had ceded to the Maratha general Visaji Pant, in addition to a cash payment of three *lakhs* of rupees, as the price of his withdrawing Maratha support to Khanderao, Diwan of Mysore. Encouraged by the Maratha defeat at Panipat, Haidar not only refused to part with Baramahal but also assisted Basalat Jang, a brother of Nizam Ali, to besiege the stronghold of Sira in Tumkur district which was then held by the Marathas. Marching from success to success, he soon dominated the Carnatic districts to such an extent that the Marathas lost about 50 *lakhs* of rupees of revenue in those regions. After the conclusion of peace with Nizam Ali, in January 1762, therefore, Raghunathrao turned to the South in order to punish the Mysore usurper. But his expedition had little success, being hampered by his financial difficulties, the advent of the rainy season, dissensions in the Maratha camp and the surreptitious help the English gave Haidar Ali. The Marathas were further distracted by the second invasion of Nizam Ali which ended in his defeat at Rakshasbhuvan (August 1763). Meanwhile Haidar consolidated his position and even pushed northwards into the Krishna valley. Madhavrao, now freed from the danger of the Nizam and the handicap of his uncle (whose regency he had just overthrown and who was compelled to retire as a pensioner to Anandavalli near Nasik), decided on a more effective campaign against Haidar. At the end of the strug-

gle which occupied the whole of 1764, the Marathas dealt Haidar such a heavy blow at Jadi Hanvati in December 1764, that he had to fly from the field, disguised and wounded. But his uncle's perversity once again deprived the Peshva of the full benefits of his military triumph. Suspected of mischievous intrigues at Anadavalli, Raghunathrao was called to the South, only to spoil the culmination of a successful campaign. The terms of the treaty with Haidar, in March 1765, were formulated by Raghunathrao who retained therein a margin of advantage for his selfish designs at the expense of the Peshva. According to Wilks, the historian of Mysore, the treaty was 'an adjustment of extreme moderation considering the desperate circumstances in which Hyder was placed.'

The next campaign against Haidar Ali was again the out come of his aggressions. The local rulers of Raidurg, Bellary, Harpanhalli, Chitaldurg, etc., appealed to the Peshva for protection against the Mysore Sultan's depredations, towards the end of 1766. Madhavrao started for the South once again in January 1767. Haidar had shut himself up in Srirangapatna. The Peshva, pursuing unexpected tactics, struck at Sira and captured it. This was both a vindication of Maratha prestige (as the place had been previously held by them) and a valuable gain in itself. Marching thence to Madgiri, he succeeded in releasing the Hindu *Raja* and his mother who had been imprisoned by Haidar after his usurpation, and took them in his custody. Meanwhile the Nizam, too, was marching against Haidar, desirous of punishing him for the support he had given to his brother Basalat Jang, and hoping to make easy gains with the help of the Marathas. Haidar was thus constrained to come to terms with both his enemies. Besides surrendering important fortresses to the Marathas, he promised to pay the Peshva 31 *lakhs* of rupees and 18 *lakhs* to the Nizam, in instalments.

Madhavrao nonetheless found it necessary to repeat his military pressure on the Mysore Sultan before he could collect the gains of the late war. He led his last campaign but one, against Haidar, during the early months of 1770. Though he succeeded this time as before in capturing several important places, his failing health obliged him to retire in

April 1770. Haidar was still holding out in Srirangapatna and Bangalore. His strength lay in his better disciplined troops, but as the Portuguese observer, Peixoto, noted: 'The Marathas have not only the greatest force on their side, but the prayers of all the people, who everywhere without exception are robbed and harassed (by Haidar), and under a weight of contribution that it is not possible for them to bear.' In January 1771, Madhavrao set out for the Carnatic for the last time. But once more he had to return without accomplishing his task, as it was becoming impossible for him to bear the strain. The rest of the campaign was conducted by Trimbakrao Pethe who inflicted a severe defeat on Haidar at Moti Talab, on 5th March 1771. Haidar was ignominiously routed, but the victor as before failed to follow up his triumph. While Haidar immured himself in the fortress of Srirangapatna, the Marathas, after besieging him for some time, frittered away their resources and opportunity in futile marauding in the surrounding country. Meanwhile, the news of the Peshva's fast-approaching end reached the ears of the besieged Sultan. At this critical moment Madhavrao called off the campaign, as Poona had no money to sustain it! Peace was therefore concluded, in April 1772, by which Haidar paid 25 *lakhs* in cash and 6 *lakhs* in jewellery, agreeing further to pay 19 *lakhs* more in three annual instalments. The Marathas retained, besides, the forts of Sira, Madgiri, Gurrumkonda, Dod-ballapur, Kolar and Hoskote with their dependent territories. But with all these gains, it is to be admitted that the Marathas failed to clinch their victories over Haidar Ali, as previously against Nizam Ali, by neutralising him permanently.

In this triangular struggle between the Marathas, the Nizam and Haidar Ali, the English played a subtle and elusive game. Reserving closer examination of their activities for a later chapter, we shall cite here only a few examples of their deliberate policy. 'The Court of Directors were desirous of seeing the Marathas checked in their progress, and would have beheld combinations of other native powers against them with abundant satisfaction.' But they were unwilling to be drawn into active hostilities, 'especially as principals, in any case short of absolute defence.' They tried to befriend

Nizam Ali as a bulwark against the Marathas, but proved too unreliable. Haidar was the next possible instrument of their policy. Clive explicitly stated: 'The chief strength of the Marathas is horse, the chief strength of Haidar infantry, cannon and small arms. From the one we have nothing to apprehend but ravages, plundering and loss of revenues for a while, from the other extirpation.' Nevertheless, 'to crush the only power in the South who had been able to oppose any respectable resistance to the aggressions of the Maratha States, and who formed, if his friendship could be secured, a barrier between them and the Company's dominions, was in direct opposition to the views of that profound statesman.' (Wilks). The attitude of the English authorities in Madras was, consequently, thus expressed in a communication (dated 13th February 1770) to Calcutta: 'Were we to assist Haidar, we could not hope to reduce the power of the Marathas, and we should thereby inevitably expose the Carnatic to their ravages, and on the other hand were we to afford them assistance, they might probably be enabled to reduce Haidar entirely, which could only tend to aggrandise their power and render them more dangerous than they are at present, or in case Haidar should accommodate matters with them ... he would not fail taking the first opportunity of avenging himself upon the Carnatic and the Company. *We must therefore temporise with both in the best manner we are able.*'

The English at Bombay were no more friendly towards the Marathas, or less apprehensive of their intentions. They considered 'the growing power of the Marathas is a subject much to be lamented.' Yet they thought it necessary 'to cultivate an alliance (with the Marathas) at least for the present,' as a combination of Haidar Ali with the Nizam was feared. To prevent, if possible, the Marathas joining these two potentates, Thomas Mostyn was sent to Poona, on 19th November 1767. He stayed there till 27th February 1768. He was instructed: 'The possession of Salsette is the first and grand object we have in view,' Secondly, 'so strong and fine a country as that of Bednure should never be given to the Marathas.' Mostyn carried with him valuable gifts for the Peshva as well as Raghoba (Raghunathrao), as the latter was

expected to be helpful. The shrewd Peshva, however, stipulated in the course of the negotiation, that 'the Hon'ble Company would not support or assist any of his enemies *even though they were his relations.*' On the other hand, Madhavrao wanted the assistance of the English in the capture of Bidnur and Saunda from Haidar. Since so definite an undertaking could not be given by the envoy, Mostyn referred the Peshva to the English authorities in Bombay. The mission proved abortive, but before leaving Poona, Mostyn assured Madhavrao that 'so long as he remained firm in his friendship towards them (i.e., the English) they would not think of supporting or assisting either his relations or any one else against him.'

Having thus dealt with the three principal enemies of the Marathas in the South, Madhavrao was free to turn his full attention to the North. One of the internal enemies that the Peshva had to constantly face was Janoji Bhonsle, successor to Raghuji of Berar. He had joined Nizam Ali during his attack on Poona, but was bought off by the Peshva, after the battle of Rakshasbhuvan (1763), with a grant of territory worth 32 *lakhs* annually. In spite of this Janoji persisted in his enmity towards the Peshva, and complained to the Emperor Shah Alam that the Peshva had 'invaded the patrimonial territories of His Majesty's bounden servant and vassal.' In the South he colluded with Raghunathrao, the Nizam and Haidar Ali, against Madhavrao. In October 1765, therefore, Madhavrao led an expedition against him in order to punish him for his treacherous behaviour. He also called upon the Nizam to assist him, according to the terms of his last treaty with him. Janoji being ill prepared for such a contest, started peaceful negotiations. The Peshva let him go after reducing his previous grant to 8 *lakhs*. The remaining 24 *lakhs* worth of lands were shared between the Peshva and the Nizam: 15 *lakhs* were given to the Nizam while the Peshva retained only 9 *lakhs*.

Further North, the situation was very complicated. The immediate effect of the Maratha disaster at Panipat, and their consequent retreat to the south, was that all the northern powers, big and small, reasserted themselves. The principal among them were the Rajputs, the Jats, and the Bundelas,

among the Hindus; and the Rohilas and the Nawab of Oudh among the Muslims. Ahmad Shah Abdali, so long as he was alive, was interested only in getting his tribute regularly without having to lead further military expeditions into Hindusthan. Suraj Mal Jat was the most powerful ruler there in point of troops as well as treasure. With him was allied the intriguing Ghazi-ud-din since the rise of the Rohilla Najib Khan, the evil genius who had brought about the Panipat disaster. Najib Khan, now styled Najib-ud-daulah, as we noted before, was Dictator at Delhi, until his death on 31st October 1770. His rival Shuja-ud-daulah of Oudh was ever watchful for an opportunity to overthrow him and bring back to Delhi the fugitive Emperor Shah Alam II whose *Vazir* he was.

The first prominent Maratha general to fight heroically after Panipat for the recovery of Maratha power in the North was Malharrao Holkar. On the one side he had to deal with Madhav Singh of Jaipur, and on the other with Shuja-ud-daulah. In between were the Jats and the Sikhs who gave him endless trouble. Nevertheless he successfully grappled with all of them, until his death on 20th May 1766. But the Punjab was permanently lost to the Marathas after Panipat. Ten years later, when they came back to Delhi, writes H. R. Gupta, 'they found the Sikhs too securely established in the Land of the Five Rivers to be ousted by them.' Raghunathrao was the next general to attempt the pacification of the North. He had reached Central India a month before the death of Malharrao. Though he began well with exacting tribute from Bhopal, Gohad and the Jat *raja*, he suddenly retreated in the face of a threatened invasion by Ahmad Shah Abdali. Even Shuja-ud-daulah and the English, for once, offered to combine with the Marathas for the expulsion of Abdali, but 'he (Raghunath) pleaded rains and went home!' Ahmad Shah was held by the Sikhs at Lahore; but thanks to the vagaries of Raghunathrao, the opportunity of recovering the Punjab was forever lost.

One of the reasons for Raghunathrao's strange behaviour was the aituation created by the death of Malharrao in the Holkar's State. His immediate successor, Malerao, died soon after, early in 1767, without leaving an heir. Raghunathrao

wanted to impose on the State his own nominee, with the help of an old minister, Gangadhar Yeshvant Chandrachood, who was his partisan. But his designs were frustrated by the determined resistance of the famous Ahilyabai (mother of Malerao) and Tukojirao Holkar.* Gangadhar was dismissed and the Peshva approved of Ahilyabai's assumption of the administration, while Tukoji undertook to defend the State with his troops. Until her death in 1795, Ahilyabai carried on the government with great tact and statesmanship, and earned for herself a unique reputation.

After the death of Malharrao Holkar, the sitution in the North again seemed to worsen for the Marathas. But the Peshva decided on more vigorous action, and dispatched Mahadji Shinde and Tukoji Holkar to turn the tide in his favour. Unfortunately there was little harmony between the two Maratha generals. In spite of the civil wars that were rampant within Mewar and the Jat kingdom, therefore, they were unable to present a united front to the enemies of the Marathas. In their personal scramble for spoils, they completely forgot the mission on which they had been sent by the Peshva. Two more chiefs, Ramachandra Ganesh Kanade and Visaji Krishna Biniwale, who were sent with reinforcements, proved no better. They only made confusion worse confounded. Matters came to a crisis when Tukoji and Ramchandra joined Najib-ud-daulah, the inveterate enemy of the Marathas, in order to crush the Jats. Mahadji Shinde was convinced that this unnatural alliance would prove fatal to the Marathas, and he was right. When Najib was baffled by his allies in his policy of grab, he cried out: 'Even when I am dead and buried, I'll eat you all up, with only 10,000 men!' Yet, when Najib actually died, on 31st October 1770, and Tukoji and Ramchandra Ganesh got enmeshed in the designs of Najib's son Zabita Khan, Mahadji Shinde and Visaji Krishna espoused the cause of the exiled Emperor Shah Alam and succeeded in reinstating him on the throne

* Tukojirao Holkar was not related to Malharrao Holkar, but was one of his trusted lieutenants. Ahilyabai was the wife of Malharrao's son Khanderao who had predeceased his father. Malerao was the son of Khanderao and Ahilyabai.

of Delhi. Shuja-ud-daulah and the English having failed him in the realisation of his cherished dream of mounting the throne of his ancestors, Shah Alam turned to the Marathas. Encouraged by a secret message from Mahadji Shinde, the anxious Emperor sent a messenger, Saif-ud-din Muhammad Khan, to the Maratha camp on 27th December 1770. On 10th February 1771 Maratha troops forced their way into the Imperial capital. The Emperor started on his historic journey from Allahabad, hitherto his headquarters, in April 1771 but reached his destination only on 6th of January 1772. Shah Alam promised to pay the Marathas 40 *lakhs* of rupees, besides ceding important districts like Meerut, Kara (Jahanabad) and Kora, and agreeing to abide by their recommendations in the choice of his Imperial staff below the rank of the *Vazir*. Actually, the office of *Mir Bakshi* was conferred upon Zabita Khan, owing to pressure from Tukoji Holkar and Visaji Krishna. Mahadji Shinde was irrevocably opposed to the elevation of Zabita, the son of the eternal enemy of the Marathas, Najib Khan. On 17th December 1772 they obtained the *sanad* from Shah Alam for Kora and Allahabad. Rohilkhand, Sahranpur, and Meerut were restored to Zabita Khan. While these events were taking place at Delhi, the Peshva Madhavrao died at Thevur on 18th November 1772.

"The plains of Panipat were not more fatal to the Maratha Empire," wrote Grant Duff, "than the early end of this excellent prince (i. e. Madhavrao I)". Madhavrao was only twenty-eight years of age when he died. In the course of the precious eleven years of his all too brief regime, he had certainly achieved the three-fold task he had set himself at the outset : the Nizam and Haidar were humbled, and the English were not allowed to come in the way of Maratha recovery. Nay, the Mughal Emperor who was still the symbol of Imperial supremacy in India, was released from English custody and reinstalled in Delhi by the Marathas. But as misfortune decreed, the brilliant young Peshva was removed by death in the very hour of Maratha triumph. The loss, indeed, was very great. Yet, if it did not prove immediately so fatal as Grant Duff imagined, the result was due to the military genius of Mahadji Shinde and the diplomatic genius of

Nana Fadnavis. Much has been written by way of personal criticism of these two great men, and they were not impeccable. Nevertheless it could be claimed without exaggeration that they were the last saviours of the Maratha Empire. After them came the deluge.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST PHASE

THE history of India during the next three decades (1772-1802) was epoch-making. On 31st of December 1802 Baji II wrote the epitaph, called the "Treaty of Bassein", on the Empire which Bajirao I had set out to create eighty years before. During the first five decades of this period closing with the death of Madhavrao I, the Marathas—under their three brilliant Peshvas (Bajirao I, Balaji Bajirao, and Madhavrao I)-- had well nigh succeeded in expanding their *Svarajya* into *Samrajya*. Despite the terrible warning of Panipat they went ahead, and by 1772 stood on the threshold of Imperial supremacy. Like Robert Clive in 1765, Mahadji Shinde in 1784 preferred to maintain the show of acting as an humble servant of His Imperial Majesty Shah Alam II, instead of usurping his nominal authority. Just as Clive got the *Diwani* for the Company, from the defeated Shah Alam on the earlier occasion, so on the later, Mahadji secured only the title of *Vakil-i-Mutluq*, from the same Emperor, *not for himself but for his principal*, the Peshva. But it is important to note the difference: viz. that, while the English got only the partial and subordinate office of *diwan* (i. e. revenue collector) in one of the provinces of the Empire, the Marathas obtained for the Peshva the higher rank of "Viceregent of the Empire". For himself, Mahadji was content with the position of *Naib* (or Deputy for the Peshva), but in command of the Imperial army at Delhi. As a guarantee for the pay of his troops he also secured the assignment of the *subahs* of Delhi and Agra in his own name (though he had to pay to the Emperor Rs. 65,000 monthly out of their revenues as a primary charge). With the Emperor in his custody, with his army in Delhi and Agra, and the Peshva recognised as Viceregent of the Empire, formally as well as in reality, Mahadji had made the Marathas *the supreme power in India*. This position was not lost by the Marathas until after the death of Mahadji Shinde in 1794, and of Nana Fadnavis in 1800.

We must now turn for a while to the fateful events in Poona and Maharashtra. Madhavrao I had been succeeded by his younger brother Narayanrao on the Peshva's *gadi*, in 1772; but he was murdered in the presence of his uncle Raghunathrao, on 30th August the very next year. Raghoba (as we shall hereafter call Raghunathrao) immediately became the next Peshva. We need not dwell on the controversy surrounding this nefarious assassination. Considering Raghoba's antecedents, his accession to the *gadi*, the rewards he bestowed on the murderers (including Sumer Singh), and his subsequent conduct and betrayal of Maratha integrity, sufficiently expose his share in the guilt. From the point of view of his nation, his invocation of the assistance of the English against his own people was a worse crime. If the verdict of Rama Shastri went against the individual (Raghoba), the Treaty of Surat (7th March 1775) was fatal to the Marathas as a political power: for the surrender of Raghoba's son, Bajirao II, by the Treaty of Bassein (31st December 1802), was but the culmination of that betrayal. As Mahadji Shinde had restored Shah Alam to Delhi in January 1772, Arthur Wellesley reinstated Baji II in Poona, on 13th May 1803. On 3rd June 1818, the same Bajirao II, after a futile struggle with the English, abjectly surrendered, once more, to Sir John Malcolm. The Peshva became a pensioner of the English, and the Maratha bid for Empire was finally foreclosed. To appreciate the full extent of this miscarriage of the Maratha Imperial venture, we should go a little deeper into the denouement. Before the anticlimax came under Bajirao II, the climax had been reached under the dual leadership of Mahadji Shinde and Nana Fadnavis.

By an interesting coincidence, both these leaders happened to have escaped alive from the holocaust of Panipat. Mahadji was wounded in the battle and lamed in one leg for life. Nana Fadnavis was just entering his teens and crawled out of Panipat to play his great role in history. No two men could be more dissimilar in their personal appearance and character than were Mahadji and Nana; yet destiny brought them together, with important consequences to the Marathas. Shinde was a stout warrior and general gifted with all the

qualities which make for military success. His dark and thick-set figure with a round face little suggested the virile character that Mahadji displayed throughout his career. He was sociable, even theatrical at times, very shrewd, and astute in his dealings with all kinds of people in various walks of life. Above all he had a keen eye for his own advantage and made the best of opportunities as they arose. Nana Fadnavis was slim and tall, calculating and austere, with a face supported on a crany neck. Diplomacy was his battlefield, and his manœuvres were political intrigues. He was a very good manager of the affairs of State, particularly adroit at accounts. He could create opportunities for himself if they did not come his way of their own accord, and make them yield the utmost profit to himself. If he had been a little less addicted to power for its own sake, and less jealous of others with at least equal claims to it, he might have rendered more valuable service to the Maratha State than he did actually. Mahadji was more friendly towards the English than was Nana. Perhaps this was because his territorial interests were in the North (Delhi and Central India) beyond the pale of direct British influence or rivalry. On the other hand, Nana was in the very centre of the main currents of British diplomacy and conflicts. Nevertheless the attitude and policy of both were essentially patriotic, *vis-a-vis* the other powers, and whatever their personal differences they struggled, on the whole, to sustain and consolidate the supremacy of the Marathas in India. Outwardly, at any rate, they acted in unison, as the right and left hands of the Peshva, as Madhavrao II appropriately described Mahadji Shinde and Nana Fadnavis.

Events briefly noticed above proved to be the testing time for every Maratha patriot. The details of the Anglo-Maratha struggle will be considered a little later. Here we shall stress mainly its internal aspects down to the last days of Nana Fadnavis, which synchronised with the end of the eighteenth century. Mahadji Shinde died six years earlier. Raghoba did not long enjoy the Peshvaship acquired through the crime of his nephew's murder (30th August 1773). He attempted to divert the attention of his people at home by leading expeditions against the Nizam and Haidar Ali, but

unexpected developments in Poona called him back post-haste. On 18th April 1774 a posthumous son was born to Gangabai, widow of the murdered Narayanrao. This proved a godsend to the *Bar Bhais* (12 comrades) as the opponents of Raghoba were called. Under the leadership of Nana Fadnavis, presently supported by the very able Sakharam Bapu Bokil and Parashuram Bhau Patwardhan, the child was named Sawai Madhavrao (Madhavrao II) and proclaimhd Peshva at Purandar on the 40th day of his birth. To meet this challenge from his own countrymen, Raghoba sought refuge with the English on the west coast. Needless to say, they were only too ready to help if thereby they could obtain the 'grand objective' of Salsette and Bassein which they had long coveted. This they did secure, not only by the Treaty of Surat (6th March 1775) which Raghoba signed, but also by the terms of the Treaty of Salbai (17th May 1782) which the Maratha opponents of Raghoba, Nana Fadnavis and Mahadji Shinde were finally obliged to accept at the end of the First Maratha War. Even by the freer Purandar settlement (1st March 1776), which proved tentative and abortive, the English had insisted upon keeping Salsette and Bassein for themselves, whatever else might be changed. Like Frederick II of Prussia's acquisition of Silesia by dint of military occupation, the English stuck to their gains on the west coast, in every successive settlement, thanks to the original sin of Raghoba in inviting their intervention in the domestic affairs of the Marathas. After this they had no qualms in abandoning the cause of their guilty protege, for he was handed over to the tender mercies of his opponents, though under the stipulation of being allowed to settle down at Kopergaum with a pension of Rs. 25,000 per month. From that moment Raghoba disappears from the history of the Peshvas, to quit the world of the living altogether two years later (1784).

For twenty years after Salbai, the English were at peace with the Marathas. The next war between them was caused by Raghoba's son, Bajirao II, following in the footsteps of his notorious father. It was the direct outcome of the Treaty of Bassein (31st December 1802) by which Bajirao entered Wellesley's network of 'subsidiary alliances.' Meanwhile Mahadji Shinde and Nana Fadnavis were free to pursue their

work of Maratha consolidation with reference to the other Indian powers, *viz.*, Delhi, Hyderabad and Mysore. After the Treaty of Salbai (1782) and until his last visit to Poona, in June 1782, Mahadji with the help of the French general de Boigne, more than recovered his firm hold on the Mughal Emperor and his own possessions in North India. As H. G. Keene observed 'In the great competitive examination which had been going on for many years, Sindhia had come out first and taken all the prizes.' To mention only the most outstanding of these achievements, the Afghans and the Rajputs were not inclined to allow the Shinde to enjoy with ease his triumph at Delhi. Consequently, at the end of May 1787, Mahadji was faced with a crisis such as he had never met in his entire life. At Lalsot (about 40 miles south of Jaipur) he had to retire before a combination of his enemies which he could not hope successfully to encounter without reinforcements from Poona. In a touching letter to Nana Fadnavis, Mahadji wrote: 'We serve a common master (i.e. the Peshva): let our exertions be directed to the common cause; let the cause of the Maratha nation be upheld in Hindusthan, and prevent our Empire from being disunited and overthrown.' Before effective help could reach him from the Deccan, however, the worst horrors were perpetrated by the Afghans in Delhi, during the enforced absence of Mahadji. The spoliation of the city and the blinding of the miserable Emperor Shah Alam, by the fiendish Ghulam Qadir (son of Zabita Khan), were part of these atrocities. At last retribution came when, as the result of his defeat and flight, Ghulam Qadir was hanged on a roadside tree, after being blinded and mutilated by Mahadji's soldiers, on 3rd March 1789. Once again the hapless Emperor was reinstated at Delhi by the arms of the Marathas, and 'the homage of the Peshva and his Deputy was duly presented.'

The situation in the South which the Marathas were called upon to face was not entirely of their making. It was a quadrangular struggle between the Marathas, the Nizam, Haidar Ali, and the English. Since the withdrawal of de Bussy from Hyderabad, however, the Nizam had come under the power of the English. Though Nizam Ali was by no means friendly towards the Marathas, he had been too tho-

roughly neutralised by the Peshva Madhavrao I in 1763 to be of any great consequence. Thereafter he only played a subordinate role as an ally of one or the other among the remaining powers. In the war that the English waged simultaneously with Haidar Ali and the Marathas (i.e., between 1780 and 1782), the Nizam was placated by the restoration of Guntur to Basalat Jang after its unwarranted seizure by the Company's officers at Madras. Haidar, who was determined to drive the English out of the country, might have welcomed assistance from any of his neighbours. Nizam Ali being neutralised by his enemies, an alliance with the Marathas was not beyond the scope of practical politics. Hence, although hostilities had ceased between the English and the Marathas, and the Treaty of Salbai had been agreed to by Mahadji Shinde in May 1782, Nana Fadnavis deferred signing it until the issue between the English and Haidar should be decided. But Haidar died unexpectedly on 7th December 1782, and the war was continued by his son Tipu. Consequently, Nana Fadnavis ratified the treaty with the English on 26th February following.

There was little love lost between Tipu and the Marathas. He was less tactful and more implacable than his father Haidar. Yet the Governor of Madras, Lord Macartney, concluded the Treaty of Mangalore with him in March 1784, to the great chagrin of Warren Hastings. When Lord Cornwallis become Governor-General in 1786, however, the situation again changed. In March 1788 he wrote to Malet, English Resident in Poona, 'I look upon a rupture with Tipu as a certain and immediate consequence of a war with France, and in that event a vigorous co-operation of the Marathas would be of the utmost importance to our interests in the country.' The result was that when the Third Anglo-Mysore War broke out, as a consequence of Tipu's attack on Travancore, in December 1789, both the Nizam and the Marathas joined the English. In reward for this service the Nizam got territory between the Krishna and Pennar rivers, while the Marathas acquired the region down to the Tungabhadra which they had lost by the aggressions of Haidar and Tipu. The Treaty of Srirangapatna (1792) by which Tipu was compelled to surrender these and other territories to the English

was not calculated to ensure peace in the South for long. Another Mysore War, final and conclusive, followed out of Tipu's intrigues with the French and Wellesley's imperialistic policy. 'The Tiger of Mysore' died fighting at Srirangapatna on 4th May 1799, and the old Hindu dynasty of Mysore was reinstated under the ægis of the British. The Nizam was an active ally of the English and was further rewarded with additions to his territories on the north-east of Mysore. This, however, was only a temporary gain. He had already entered into the 'subsidiary system' in 1798. In 1800 by another Treaty he was obliged to part with his recent acquisitions of territory between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers in payment for British protection. The Marathas were also 'allies,' but they did not participate in the final overthrow of Tipu. Nevertheless, Wellesley thought it politic to offer them a share in the spoils of victory 'on condition that the Peshva should enter into definite agreement against the French and undertake never to employ Europeans without the Company's consent, and should guarantee the inviolability of the new State to be erected in Mysore.' This the Marathas refused.

Hutton, the biographer of Wellesley, has attributed the Maratha rejection to their 'extraordinary blindness.' But we must look for other reasons. The man responsible for that rejection was the astute Nana Fadvanis. Despite the extraordinary difficulties with which he was surrounded, he had consistently and steadily refused to be drawn into any subservient alliance with the British. Considering the fate of the rulers of Hyderabad, Mysore, and even Poona, when both Mahadji Shinde and Nana Fadnavis were dead, we cannot agree that the Marathas were 'blind' in rejecting the 'Imperial' offers of Wellesley. So long as Nana was alive, even Wellesley felt baffled. 'Hitherto', he confessed in 1800, 'either the capricious temper of Bajirao, or some remains of the nation with regard to foreign relations, have frustrated my object and views.' Nana Fadnavis died on 13th March 1800, and Bajirao walked into the English trap by the end of 1802. No wonder that Col. Palmer (British Resident in Poona) exclaimed on the death of Nana: 'With him departed all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government.'

Retaining the independence of the Marathas, he had not refused to co-operate with either the Nizam or the English. When Tipu made a gratuitous attack on the Maratha territories in 1785, Nana, in co-operation with the Nizam, compelled him to surrender the districts of Badami, Kittur and Nargund, at the end of a campaign which terminated in April 1787. In the Third Anglo-Mysore War, he joined the English along with the Nizam against Tipu and recovered old Maratha possessions down to the Tungabhadra, by the Treaty of Srirangapatna (1792). The Marathas were still strong at this time, and there was no suggestion of subordination to any of their allies. On the other hand, they could act alone if necessary, and with vigour, when their jealous allies stood aloof. Mahadji Shinde demonstrated this, in 1789, in North India in the face of a formidable combination of all his enemies. Despite the personal jealousy existing between them, Nana too responded to the national call of Mahadji, stating: 'They can never establish their supremacy at Delhi, if the Marathas act vigorously and in union.' The master of the Emperor of Delhi, Mahadji Shinde, had the political tact to affect humility and submission to the Peshva, during his last visit to Poona in 1792. That served to prevent a rupture with the powerful Nana Fadnavis and thereby maintained the unity of the Marathas. Mahadji died at Vanaudi (near Poona) on 12th February 1794 and left the field clear for Nana Fadnavis. The remaining six years of the latter's life were full of internal turmoil which we shall examine in another place. The climax of Maratha national effort was reached in 1795 when a preposterous challenge was thrown out by the Nizam. Counting upon English support in a possible contest with the Marathas, and relying on troops trained by the Frenchman Raymond, the Nizam had long evaded payments due to the Marathas. When the Maratha agent at Hyderabad made persistent demands for these payments, the Nizam's *diwan* made extraordinary counter-claims upon the Marathas and arrogantly suggested that, if there should be a trial of strength between the two, the Nizam would very soon send the Peshva on a pilgrimage to Benares in a bare *langoti* (loin cloth). As a consequence, battle was joined between Nizam's forces and the Marathas at Kharda (56 miles south-east of Ahmad-

nagar) in March 1795. On this occasion, for the last time, all the Maratha chiefs presented a united front. The forces of the Peshva, Daulatrao Shinde (Mahadji's successor), Tukojirao Holkar, the Gaikwad, and even the Raja of Berar, were all there under the command of the veteran Parshuram Bahu Patwardhan. In this decisive action, Nizam Ali was defeated, his *diwan*, the boastful Mashir-ul-Mulk was taken prisoner, and a heavy indemnity of three *crores* of rupees was exacted besides the arrears of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*, previously in demand; the fort of Daulatabad and all the territory from the river Tapti to Parenda was also ceded to the Peshva. The Raja of Berar obtained lands worth [Rs.] 3,18,000 annually. The Marathas routed in this battle an army of nearly 100,000, killing and wounding about 15,000 of the enemy, with the loss of hardly 100 men for themselves.

In the foregoing rapid review of the events leading to the climax of the Maratha imperial adventure we have had necessarily to overlook several details, especially relating to the last phase. But, for a clearer understanding of the sad *denoument* of the thrilling drama of the rise of the Maratha power in India—with its deep *inspirations* and unambiguous *warnnings*—a closer acquaintance with the precise nature of the clash between the Marathas and their political rivals is called for. Hence, what follows will throw some additional light on the causes of the ultimate failure of the Marathas. This is more vital to the purpose of our present study than a mere evocation of the inspirations.

The ground for the final 'show-down' with the Marathas ending in the establishment of British supremacy in India, was prepared by the happenings in the North. The three Anglo-Maratha wars that ensued were the direct outcome of the increasing sense of danger and insecurity from the other felt by both parties. An appeal to the English in Calcutta, for action against the Rohillas, preferred by the Nawab of Oudh, provided the initial provocation.

The Rohillas were Afghans or Pathans who had settled

cf. Kulkarni, *British Statesmen in India:* "The foreigners had succeeded in establishing their sway over the indegeneous population, numbering some six millions, whose labour was ruthlessly exploited for their own

round modern Bareilly between the upper Ganges and Gogra rivers, west of Oudh. They were hardy peasant warriors entitled to their independence as a State, as much as the Nawab of Oudh, or any other rulers in the eighteenth century. Their chieftain Hafiz Rahmat Khan governed 'well and tolerantly,' the majority of his subjects were Hindus, though he could not protect himself against his restless neighbours. Because of the frequent incursions of the Marathas, he was obliged to seek the assistance of the Nawab of Oudh, for love or money. The latter agreed to help in return for Rs. 40 *lakhs*. In 1773, the dreaded Marathas withdrew from Rohilkhand either on account of the prospect of a war with the Nawab of Oudh (who was supported by the English), or for other reasons, e.g., troubles at home caused by the murder of the Peshva Narayanrao. Nevertheless, Shuja-ud-daula demanded the stipulated compensation of Rs. 40 lakhs, which Hafiz Rahmat Khan failed to pay. Consequently the Nawab-Wazir (Shuja-ud-daula) planned a punitive campaign against the Rohillas, in concert with Hastings who readily agreed to lend the Company's troops (by the Treaty of Benares, at which the transfer of Kora and Allahabad to the Nawab was also effected), for the reasons stated above. The Nawab, in return, promised to pay to the Company Rs. 50 *lakhs* spread over a number of years, plus Rs. 40 *lakhs* immediately after victory. The projected campaign ended with the 'extermination' of the Rohillas, on 17th April 1774, when the Khan fell fighting gallantly at the battle of Miran Katra (Shahjahanpur District), and nearly 20,000 Rohillas crossed the Ganges into the territory of Zabita Khan in the west. This event was accompanied with a ruthlessness that might have been described today as 'genocide,' in which the Company's British troops under Colonel Champion had no small share. We shall not enter into the controversial details of that enormity here, for its political aspects are more important than its humanitarian aspects. The task of incriminating or absolving Warren Hastings for the

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glory and gratification...these treacherous and turbulent men had incurred the enmity of the Marathas by making common cause with the Afghan invaders in the famous battle of Panipat in 1761." (pp. 40-41).

consequene may be left to his biographers. But the Governor General clearly admitted: 'We engaged to assist the Viziar in reducing Rohilla country...that the boundary of his possessions might be completed, by the Ganges forming a barrier to cover them from the attacks and insult to which they were exposed by his enemies either possessing or having access to the Rohilla country. This our alliance with him, and the necessity of maintaining this alliance, so long as he or his successors shall deserve our protection, was rendered advantageous to the Company's interest, because the security of his possessions from invasion in that quarter is in fact the security of ours.' Nothing could be more explicit than this. 'The absence of the Marathas and the weak state of the Rohillas promised an easy conquest of them,' wrote Hastings to Sulivan. It was an unprincipled act of spoliation which no sort of casuistry or rhetoric can successfully camouflage. It was more than 'somewhat cynical' as Sir John Strachey was forced to admit. Though Vincent Smith found in the policy of the Rohilla war 'nothing to be ashamed of,' Thompson and Garratt more justly declare: 'Today the Rohilla War should be beyond defence by any critic with principles.' Apart from Rohillas, whose title to that province was at least as good as that of the English to Bengal, the people too suffered by this change of masters. The rule of the Nawabs of Oudh over Rohilkhand was more inefficient, corrupt, and oppressive than that of the Rohillas.

Though in this Rohilla episode there was no direct and indirect conflict between the English and the Marathas, its repercussions were calculated to intensify the hostility between the two.

Turning to western and southern India, Warren Hastings as Governor-General was called upon to tackle problems that were not of his creation. There were two inter-related wars into which the subordinate authorities at Bombay and Madras had fallen, and Warren Hastings was called upon to 'pull the chestnuts out of the fire' as best he could. 'Here,...and elsewhere in India,' according to *The Cambridge Shorter History of India* (p. 576), 'European intervention was produced ***not by the aggressive ambitions of the European,*** but by the decay of the Indian States themselves and the desire of the

Indian princes for European support'. An unbiassed scrutiny of the situation does not support this half-truth. Though it may be true that India as a whole and Indian States in specific instances were decadent, in the view of modern historians, the Marathas were certainly an exception at this stage. As Lyall has described them, in Western India they were 'supreme', and 'everything pointed to the Marathas as destined to be the foremost rivals of the English in the impending contest for ascendancy'. That was why Hastings considered them to be 'our only enemies'. If we recall the situation in the time of Peshva Madhavrao I, described earlier, we shall be able to assess the facts correctly. The unpatriotic invitation to the Europeans in this instance had not come unsought; it was the fruit of sedulous diplomatic cultivation by the English authorities at Bombay. The gullible Raghoba was an English nursling fed on English presents and promises. When even he would not willingly cede to the English the stronghold of Bassein and Salsette, 'the first and grand object we have in view', they took it by force and then engaged themselves (by the Treaty of Surat, 6th March 1775), to support Raghoba, the murderous usurper, against the legitimate Peshva. This action was taken despite the assurance given by Mostyn to Madhavrao that, so long as he remained firm in his friendship towards the English, 'they would not think of supporting or assisting either his relations or any one else against him'. Nothing had happened since to justify the denunciation of that engagement. Besides, the bellicose British at Bombay launched unprovoked hostilities against Poona without previous consultation with the Governor-General (as they were required to do under the provisions of the Regulating Act). Hence their action was stigmatised by Hastings, not less than by his otherwise recalcitrant Council, as, 'unseasonable war came in anything but an inevitable manner'. (Thompson and Garratt). Yet war is by its very nature such that (as Polonius advised) it can be terminated only by seeing 'that the enemy may beware of thee'.

Madhavrao I died on 18th November 1772. His brother Narayanrao was murdered, on 30th August 1773, in the interest of Raghoba. On 18th April following was born the posthumous son of the murdered Peshva, who was soon after

proclaimed as Peshva Sawai Madhavrao (Madhavrao II). The guilty usurper Raghoba, having no other resource left him, flew to the English, and eventually concluded with them the Treaty of Surat, on 6th March 1775. By this the English undertook to reinstate him at the cost, to him, of 1½ *lakhs* of rupees per month for the maintenance of the supporting troops, jewellery worth Rs. 6 *lakhs* to be deposited with the English as a pledge, and further to cede to them in perpetuity all the islands near Bombay, including Thana, Salsette, Bassein, and the *talukas* of Olpad and Jambusar near Surat. In spite of all this, however, the English ultimately found it expedient to treat Raghoba as a pretender, and came to terms with his enemies. The tortuous route by which they arrived at this conclusion may be summarised very briefly.

Mostyn was the soul of the conspiracy in support of Raghoba.* Hornby was the Governor of Bombay under whose orders the whole affair was worked out without the cognisance of the Governor-General, until Hastings was obliged to assert himself. On first learning of the unfortunate happenings on the west coast, the Governor-General condemned the Bombay authorities in scathing terms, and peremptorily ordered the withdrawal of the Company's forces 'in whatever state your affairs may be, unless their safety may be endangered by their retreat'. 'We hold the treaty which you have entered into with Raghoba invalid', the order declared, 'and the war which you have undertaken against the Maratha State, impolitic, dangerous, unauthorised and unjust; both are contrary to the late Act of Parliament. You have imposed on yourselves the charge of conquering the whole Maratha Empire for a man who appears incapable of affording you any effectual assistance in it;...*nor have you*

* cf. Kulkarni, *op cit* "The war against the Marathas in Western India was also precipitated by the foolish miscalculation of the local British authorities. Gambler, the President of the Bombay Council, was a vainglorious man, when vaulting ambitions unfolded before him a vista of wars, victories, new territories for his nation and undying fame for himself. But he failed to realize that the Marathas, despite the decline in their fortunes, were not a spineless people who could be subdued by fighting a few *gymkhana* wars. Gambler arbitrarily interfered in their domestic quarrels by upholding the pretensions of Raghoba..., to the Peshwaship.' (p. 52.)

the pleas either of injury sustained from the party which you have made your enemy or any prior obligation to defend the man whose cause you have espoused'. As a corrective, therefore, an embassy was sent from Calcutta, under Colonel Upton, to treat with the legitimate Peshva's government at Poona. Upton reached his destination at the close of December 1773, and concluded the Treaty of Purandar on 1st March 1776. We may not go into the details of this treaty as it lapsed before any of its terms could be implemented, on account of events to be presently described. Its principal condition was that the English should withdraw their support from Raghoba (on whom the Maratha Government would bestow a decent pension), in return for which they were to be allowed to keep Salsette, Bassein, etc.

Upton's negotiations were so prolonged and the Bombay authorities were so intractable, that events were allowed to determine policies. Already an English force had encountered the Marathas opposed to Raghoba at Arras or Adas on the Mahi river south-west of Baroda. It was a drawn battle in which both sides fought gallantly and suffered heavy casualties. Upton who was getting impatient at Poona was cleverly displaced by the redoubtable Mostyn under directions from Bombay. Meanwhile Bombay was also in communication with London, protesting against the inconvenient intervention of Calcutta. In the result, Hastings was caught on the horns of a dilemma : once more his loyalty to the Company got the better of his independent judgment. Pretender or no, war against 'our only enemies' was to be carried on. The Directors at home had decided upon 'the preservation of our honour, or the protection or safety of our possessions'. Hence the alliance with Raghoba was renewed, with inevitable consequences.

The new arrangement contemplated making Raghoba only 'Regent' to the young Peshva Madhavrao Narayan (Sawai Madhvarao or Madhavrao II). This would serve to mollify the opponents of Raghoba (so at least his English patrons thought) while at the same time he would command *de facto* authority. This was to be accomplished by force of British arms. To that end an expedition comprising 500 Europeans and 2000 Indians, accompanied by Raghoba and his troops,

was dispatched from Bombay under Col. Egerton, on 24th November 1778. Hastings had already sent a force under Col. Leslie, across the heart of Hindusthan, as part of a gigantic campaign, military and diplomatic, to try conclusions with the Marathas. On the diplomatic front he commissioned Alexander Elliot, who had recently arrived from England to win over Mudhoji Bhonsle of Berar, that he might not oppose the Bengal army's passage through his territories. There were other sides to this embassy to which we shall revert later. 'Elliot is gone,' wrote Hastings to Impey on 20th July 1778, 'on a most critical service, but likely to prove the era of a new system in the British Empire in India, if it succeeds'. Bombay was a necessary and important link in the Governor-General's strategy; but, immediately, it proved one of the weakest.

The ill-conceived enterprise under Egerton ended in a disaster. It was one of the 'romantic projects' of the egregious Mr. Mostyn, who took ill at Khandala and returned to Bombay, to die there on 1st January 1779. The Governor of Bombay, as Farmer (who was in the expedition) tells us, had been 'misled by the assurance of poor Mostyn', and wanted also to engross the whole honour of this project and would not wait for the aid of Goddard'. (Leslie of the Bengal expedition having died on the way, his charge was entrusted to Goddard). To cut a long story short, the Bombay expeditionary force was cut to pieces by the Marathas at Talegaon (on the Ghats, 29 miles from Poona), on 14th January 1779. There was no help but to surrender. The capitulation, dignified as the 'Convention of Wadgaum', was signed on 18th January by which Raghoba and two English hostages (Farmer and Stewart) were made over to Mahadji Shinde who had organised the victory for the Marathas on this historic occasion. The other terms of the surrender included the evacuation by the English of Thana, Salsettee, and places in Gujarat recently taken by them, as well as the recall of the Bengal army by the Governor-General. This was too humiliating for the proud English authorities both at Bombay and Calcutta,* and they decided on the continuation of the

* The "Convention," Hastings declared, "almost made me sink with shame when I read it."

war, repudiating the 'Convention of Wadgaum'. Those that had swallowed the 'camel' of Purandar were not likely to strain at the 'gnat' of Wadgaum.

Raghoba escaped from the custody of Mahadji Shinde and once more became a pawn in the English game. Mudhoji Bhonsle of Berar was bought off by Hastings with a promise to help him in his aspiration towards the Chhatrapati's *gadi* at Satara, and the gold extorted from the Raja of Benares supplemented the overtures of Elliot (above mentioned). The Nizam of Hyderabad too was detached from the Marathas by conceding his claims on Guntur (to be explained a little later). Haidar Ali of Mysore, though united with the Marathas, in a common hatred of the English, was engrossed in his struggle in the Carnatic.* Fatehsingh Gaikwad made a separate treaty with Goddard on 26th January 1780 by which the English supported Fatehsingh against his brother Govindrao. They together captured Ahmedabad in the following month. A desultory war on the west coast was carried on without any decisive results for some time. The British met with a minor defeat at Panvel, but compensated themselves with the capture of Kalyan and Bassein. However, Goddard soon emulated the enterprise of Col. Egerton on Bhor Ghat and made another impressive contribution to Maratha military prestige, by this spectacular failure. Starting on 9th February from his base at Kalyan, he was struggling up the Ghats until April, when he was overwhelmed by his enemy who inflicted on him a loss of 3000 men with 19 officers killed, besides 5,000 muskets captured. On 5th May Bombay recorded: 'Such a setback was never experienced by the British before. All Bombay disparages this performance with open ridicule'. Neverthless, the balance was turned against the Marathas in Central India by the generals sent there by Warren Hastings. Popham's capture of Gwalior with the assistance of the Rana of Gohad (Shinde's enemy),

* Nana Fadnavis wrote to Haidar Ali, on February 7, 1800 : 'The English are bent upon subjecting the States of Poona, Nagpur, Mysore and Hyderabad one by one, by enlisting the sympathy of one to put down the others.' Likewise he warned Mahadji Shinde : 'If we let them act as they wish, we shall only bring calamity on ourselves and subvert our Empire.'
—Kulkarni, *op cit.* p. 54.

on August 1780, followed by Camac's success at Sironj in February 1781, with reinforcements under Muir pouring in, convinced Mahadji Shinde of the wisdom of making peace with the English. He possessed the true warrior's appreciation of others like himself. During this war Popham, Bruce and Camac amply displayed the best soldierly qualities. On the other hand, Hastings too realised that there was a limit up to which he could go in inciting the local princes (like Gohad) against their Maratha superiors (Grant Duff). More than anything else, the finances of the English had begun to feel the strain of the prolonged war carried on, not only in western and central India, but also against Haidar Ali in the Carnatic. The greatest distress of the Bombay authorities, as Grant Duff had pointed out, 'was their total want of funds. They looked to Bengal for a supply of treasure; but the hostility of Hyder...superadded to their own distress, induced the Supreme Government to declare that they could afford no assistance to the Bombay presidency'. As early as 15th May, 1780, they wrote to Bombay: 'Our distress for money is such that we shall be unable to make adequate remittances for the support of your Presidency, and the pay of the large army under the command of Brigadier-General Goddard'. Consequently overtures for peace were made from all sides.

On 13th October 1781, Colonel Muir concluded a treaty with Mahadji Shinde, by which he agreed to recross the Jamuna, while the Maratha chief undertook to negotiate a general treaty between the other belligerents and the British Government. Already on 11th September, on the arrival of Mr. John Macpherson at Madras, a letter had been addressed to the Peshva, in the joint names of Lord Macartney, Sir Eyre Coote, Sir Edward Hughes and Mr. Macpherson, stating their wish for peace, and 'assuring the Peshva, upon their own honour and that of the King, the Company and the nation that just satisfaction should be given in a sincere and irrevocable treaty." This was brough about on 17th May 1782, at Salbai, between Mr. David Anderson, authorised agent of the East India Company, and Mahadji Shinde acting as the plenipotentiary of Nana Fadnavis, the Peshva, and the entire Maratha nation. The treaty comprised seventeen articles, the most important of which were: that the whole territory con-

quered since the Treaty of Purandar was to be restored; that the Gaikwad's possessions were to remain as they were before 1775; and that Raghoba was to be given a monthly allowance of Rs. 25,000. Article VI dealing with the last, stated:

> The English engage that having allowed Raghunathrao a period of four months from the time when the treaty shall become complete to fix on a place of residence, they will not, after the expiration of the said period, afford him any support, protection, or assistance, nor supply him with money for his expenses; and the Peshva on his part engages that, if Raghunathrao will voluntarily and of his own accord repair to maharaja Madhavrao Sindia, and quietly reside with him the sum of Rs. 25,000 per month shall be paid to him for his maintenance, and no injury whatever shall be offered to him by the Peshva or any of his people. (Grant Duff).

This treaty has been held by V. A. Smith as 'one of the landmarks in the history of India because it assured peace with the formidable power of the Marathas for twenty years, and marked the ascendancy of the English as the controlling, although not yet the paramount government in India'. So far as the Marathas were concerned, the only territorial loss they sustained was by leaving Salsette in English hands. For the rest the *status quo ante bellum* was recognised by both parties. Whether Salbai may be considered to have marked the 'ascendancy of the English as the controlling power' in India is open to question. The war was the outcome of their gratuitous interference in Maratha affairs. It was an illustration of their 'bid for ascendancy'. If peace obtained between the Marathas and the English for twenty years following Salbai, it was not because Maratha affairs had improved, but because the English had not forgotten the lessons of the late war. In the words of Lyall, 'The essence of the whole matter is that the Marathas were at this period far too strong and too well united to be shaken or overawed by such forces as the English could then afford or bring against them'. And in fact, he adds, 'no native power other than the Marathas did oppose any solid resistance to the spread of our dominion in upper India, until the Sikhs, long afterwards, crossed the Sutlej in 1845'.

'From this we shall now turn in another direction where the energy, boldness, tenacity and resource' of Hastings'—called by V. A. Smith 'the Chatham of the East'—were requisitioned almost simultaneously by his 'hydra-headed enemies'. These enemies, it is to be remembered, were not confined to the natives of India. They included among them the French, the Dutch, and Hastings' own countrymen (even outside his Council). We may first dispose of the extra-Indian aspects of the situation. The revolt of the American colonists had involved the English in a worldwide war with France and Holland among the other continental powers, in 1778. This had its repercussions in India. There were individual Frenchmen like de Boigne, Perron, Reymond and others who were serving under Indian powers like the Marathas, the Nizam, and Haidar Ali, with none of whom the English were friendly. Nana Fadnavis at Poona and Haidar Ali in Mysore were actively canvassing for French support as a counterpoise against the English. French troops and naval detachments were already on their way to India for the defence of their settlements here. All the French and Dutch possessions in India were at once occupied by the English, but restored to them by the peace settlement of 3rd September 1783 in Europe. If there had been peace in India between the English and the native powers, these events might have been dismissed as unimportant. But in the context of the Maratha and Mysore wars they attained a dangerous significance.

The Anglo-Maratha war, as we noticed above, ended with the Treaty of Salbai, in May 1782. One of its clauses enjoined upon the Marathas the task of bringing Haidar Ali into the peace settlement. But that was not easy, even for the diplomacy of Nana Fadnavis. Or, may be, the astute 'Maratha-Machiavel' was deliberately procrastinating with an eye on a possible triumph of Haidar in Carnatic, where the English were finding him a hard nut to crack. Here it is necessary to go back a little in order to understand the situation in the South created by the rise of Haidar Ali. His relations with the Marathas in the time of Madhavrao I (1761-1772) have been described before.

Haidar, like most other upstarts, found himself surround-

ed by enemies on all sides. He had to stabilise himself on the throne of Mysore, on the one hand, and meet external dangers at the same time on the other. On both these fronts, he very soon discovered that the English were his worst enemies. On the contrary, the French appeared friendly towards him right from the beginning of his usurpation. The Anglo-French struggle in the Carnatic only served to add fuel to the fire of antagonism between Haidar and the English since Pondicherry was in league with Mysore. With the fall of the French capital, many Frenchmen found service under Haidar Ali. Besides, the rivals of Mahamad Ali (Nawab of Arcot) received protection and support in Mysore. The English and the Nawab of Arcot, therefore, became common enemies of Haidar. Their relations were further aggravated by the 'pestilential' conditions obtaining in the Carnatic and Madras at this time.

Bengal was a paradise of angels compared with the hell that was reigning on the Coromandel coast. In the words of V. A. Smith, 'The Madras government was torn by internal dissensions and saturated with corruption'. As a result of this, Governor Lord Pigot was kept in unlawful confinement by his own Councillors, and died a prisoner. Sir Thomas Rumbold who succeeded Pigot made things easy for others as himself by joining the parasites in their profitable enterprises. The Nawab of Arcot was no better than his patrons. He was incited by his English friends to launch upon aggresive adventures againt his neighbours that he might find the wherewithal to pay the extortionate interest (36-48%) on the loans advanced by them, against assignments of land. In 1773, the Madras authorities subdued and deposed the Raja of Tanjore, with whom they had no quarrel, in order 'to oblige Mouhammad Ali'. 'These open scandals and constant changes in the government', writes P. E. Roberts, 'naturally resulted in an inconsistent and chaotic policy which soon entangled the the Presidency in the war already raging on the western side of India'.

Two wars were fought between the English and Haidar Ali: the first Anglo-Mysore War (1767-69), and the Second Anglo-Mysore War (1780-84). The causes and consequences of these wars are more important for us than the military

events which marked their course. Haidar would have remained friendly with the British but for their supporting his enemies. They first gave him umbrage by their duplicity, soon after usurpation. They were negotiating with the 'King's party' through Captain Richard Smith who was instructed by Madras to make proposals 'either to the King of Mysore or to Haidar as from circumstances shall appear to him best to serve the present purpose without concluding any definite treaty which is always to be referred to our approval and determination'. Later, during Haidar's war with the Marathas, the Bombay authorities supplied him with arms, because of the trade facilities he afforded them on the west coast. But Madras drifted into an alliance with the Nizam, in November 1766, and sent British troops to assist him in his encroachments on Haidar's dominions. However, the Nizam betrayed the English and joined Haidar. The war which ensued brought no particular advantage to either side, though ended with a treaty directed by Haidar at the gates of Madras, on 29th March 1769, by which there was a restitution of places conquered by each side. 'It cannot be denied', writes Bowring, 'that, both in regard to military operations which preceded this treaty and to the conditions which it embodied (of mutual assistance in a defensive war), the Mysore chief evinced high qualities as a tactician and the sagacity of a born diplomatist. On the other hand, the proceedings of the Madras Government were characterised by a mixture of rashness and irresolution, and an absurd confidence in their treacherous ally Muhammad Ali, of whose duplicity Haidar had, on the contrary, formed an accurate estimate'.

The Second Anglo-Mysore War started from the failure of the English to render assistance to Haidar during the Maratha invasion of his country under Madhavrao I, as they had undertaken to do by the treaty of 1769. Being confronted with a 'Hobson's choice' they chose to 'temporise with both (Haidar and the Marathas) in the best manner we are able'. On the other hand they took Haidar to task for his attack on Murarirao of Gooty, describing him as 'our friend and ally who was included in the treaty of 1769'. Again, in ostensible support of their protege, Basalat Jang (brother of the Nizam)

they marched their troops to Adoni and Kadappa, through Haidar's teritory without asking for his permission. On the outbreak of hostilities with the French, they launched an attack on the port of Mahe, on the Malabar coast, which too was under Haidar's protection and occupied it on 19th March 1779. Haidar, therefore, felt compelled to throw in his lot with the French. To make matters worse for themselves, the Madras authorities drove the Nizam into the arms of Haidar and the French, by their precipitate haste to occupy Guntur. That district was part of the Northern Sarkars which were assigned to the British, when Col. Forde ejected Bussy from Godavari valley; but by treaty arrangement with the Nizam it was to come into English possession only after the death of Basalat Jang. Yet, in 1779, they persuaded Basalat to part with it, without reference to the Nizam. At the same time, Governor Rumbold of Madras foolishly asked the Nizam to remit the tribute due to him on account of the Northern Sarkars. The infuriated Nizam consequently needed little persuasion to make common cause with the enemies of the English. These events having synchronised with the Anglo-Maratha war on the western side, they inevitably led to a formidable combination being formed between the the Marathas, the Nizam, and Haidar Ali, against their common foe the English, who were already at war with the French since 1778. 'By the summer of 1780', writes Lyall, 'the fortunes of the English in India had fallen to their lowest watermark'. Hastings was hard put to it to finance this hydra-headed conflict: 'the two Presidencies depended almost entirely on Bengal for money,' not only for money but also for brains to form the strategy, and for men as well as materials to execute it successfully.When the crisis was passed, Hasting with Ciceronian pride truly declared: 'I have been the instrument of saving one Presidency from infamy and both from annihilation'.

We cannot find space to describe all the details of the grand achievement of the Governor-General. All that we can do is to give an account adequate enough to exhibit its significance. The one-sided horrors of the war, which ensued in the manner described above, have often been cited by historians in the colourful language of Burke. 'Revolutions', Nizam-ul-Mulk

once declared, 'are not made with rose-water'. Haidar, not without provocation in this case, 'raged through the Carnatic with fire and sword'. French troops were *en route* to India to join him. The treasury at Madras was empty, and the army in the English service was demoralised. That nest of corruption and dissension was without defensive plans. Haidar had little difficulty in annihilating a detachment of about 3,000 men under Col. Baillie, while it was trying to join the main army under Sir Hector Munro, the victor of Buxar. Shaken by the unexpected disaster, Munro lost nerve and, throwing his guns and stores into a tank, retreated in panic to Madras. It was at this juncture that Hastings sent Sir Eyre Coote, the hero of Wandewash, to the rescue post haste from Bengal, by sea, with the flower of the Bengal army, adequate supplies and 15 *lakhs* of rupees. At the same time, Colonel Pearse was dispatched with a force of 5,000 men, through Orissa and the Northern Sarkars, as a reinforcement. It was in this connection that Hastings neutralised the Raja of Berar, detaching him from the 'confederacy' of the Marathas Nizam and Haidar, by 'skilful diplomacy sweetened by a *douceur* of sixteen lakhs'. He also won over the Nizam by conceding his claims regarding Guntur. Thus fortified on all sides, with full command being vested in Sir Eyre Coote, with reinforcements under Pearse, and finance and supplies managed by the Central Government at Calcutta, the tables were soon turned against Haidar Ali. He was successively defeated at Porto Novo, Pollilore, and Sholinghur, in the course of the three months of July, August and September, 1781. The arrival of the French forces under Admiral Suffren—with hopes of further reinforcements under de Bussy—though looking formidable at the time, did not affect the ultimate result. The surrender of Braithwaite at Tanjore in February 1782, was counterbalanced by Pearse's victory at Arni in the June following. The real contest, however, was waged on the sea and round Cuddalore, between Suffern and Hughes, which has been described in another place. Its outcome is best expressed in the words of Haidar Ali himself, who confessed: 'I can ruin their resources by land, but I cannot dry up the sea'. Haidar died in December 1782, and was followed by Coote soon after. Peace was restored bet-

ween the English and the French by the Treaty of Versailles, news of which arrived in India in June, 1783. The Marathas had already signed the Treaty of Salbai a year earlier. Only Tipu Sultan, Haidar Ali's son and successor, persevered in his hostilities with the English on the west coast. But he too fighting single-handed, came to terms in the Treaty of Mangalore, signed on 11th March 1784. As it was based on the mutual restitution of conquests, the war with Mysore concluded as fruitlessly as the one with the Marathas.*

The arrival of Lord Macartney, as Governor of Madras, had hastened the pace of the coming peace. Hastings who was dissatisfied with the result exclaimed: 'What a man is this Lord Macartney! I yet believe that, in spite of the peace he will effect the loss of the Carnatic'. Hastings was himself impeached on several counts, after his return to England in January 1785. We need not recount the charges here, nor review the literature that came out of the impeachment. Warren Hastings was appreciated as a statesman, admired for his qualities as a man of boundless energy and resource, praised for his loyal services to his Company and country, but condemned on moral grounds.

The third Anglo-Mysore War was a necessary sequel to the unfinished struggle between the English and the Sultan of Mysore. Munro's reading of the situation cited above presents the case in its true light. Haidar Ali had bequeathed to his more implacable son the legacy of an ambition to eliminate the English totally or to get eliminated in the attempt. Tipu, less adroit and more rash in his character than his father, not merely forfeited the balance in favour of Mysore which Haidar had achieved, but fatally played into the hands of his enemies. Haidar had well nigh succeeded in uniting all his Indian rivals in a common endeavour to oust the English.

* The Marathas had joined the English in the war against Tipu. But Cornwallis himself summed up the recults of the war by declaring: 'We have effectively crippled our enemy, without making our friends [i.e., Marathas] too formidable.' Munro wrote in January 17, 1790 'It has long been admitted as an axiom in politics by the directors of our affairs, both at home and in this country, that Tipu ought to be preserved as a barrier between us and the Marathas.'

—Kulkarni, *op. cit.* pp. 66-67.

Tipu alienated all of them by his impatience, religious fanaticism, and lack of diplomatic skill. Travancore, Coorg and the Marathas were antagonised by Tipu's fanatical zeal, while the Nizam was alienated by his imprudent demand for a bride from the Subhadar's house. Cornwalis exploited all these mistakes to his own advantage. He decided to support the preposterous claim of the Nizam over Mysore territory, in violation of the treaties of 1768 and 1784. 'He adopted,' writes Roberts, 'the extraordinary expedient of writing a letter to the Nizam, explanatory of the treaty of 1768, which declared that if the districts claimed by the Nizam should ever come into the possession of the British, they should be handed over to him; troops were to be supplied to the Nizam but were not to be employed against any powers in alliance with the British, a list of these powers was added and *the name of Tipu was deliberately excluded.*' The Marathas were also drawn into the alliance, because Tipu had lately made a wanton attack on the Desai of Nargund and perpetrated atrocities for which they were seeking vengeance.

When Tipu was forced to retreat precipitately from Travancore, by the heroism of Diwan Keshava Pillai and his brave warriors, he was confronted by the British armies that had by then begun to move against him. But the campaign organised and led by General Medows (Governor of Madras) did not go well for the English. 'The Mysore sovereign,' observes Bowring, 'may be said in this campaign to have shown greater skill in strategy than the English general who was opposed to him. But destiny had declared against him.' On the west coast, Col. Hartley and General Abercromby (Governor of Bombay who had landed at Telichery) carried all before them. Meanwhile, Cornwallis arrived at Madras, in January 1791, and planned to march against Bangalore and Seringapatam (Tipu's capital). The Nizam and the Marathas were, at the same time expected to converge on the same point. Tipu had thus no option but to fall back into his capital. Before the campaign ended with the submission of the 'Tiger of Mysore' in March 1792, Cornwallis had occupied Bangalore and the Marathas devastated Tipu's territories in the north-west. Although Cornwallis' first sallies towards Seringapatam met with the misfortunes experienced by Hector

Munro earlier near Madras (he had to bury his guns, throw his ammunition into a tank, and retreat), he ultimately succeeded in closing in upon his central target. The timely assistance of the Marathas, the Nizam, and the Bombay troops, no less than those of the hostile Coorgs, at a critical juncture contributed not a little to the success of the Governor-General. Tipu was constrained to save himself for the time being by ceding half his territories to the victors, and paying 330 *lakhs* of rupees as indemnity, besides releasing all the English prisoners in his cells and surrendering two of his sons as hostages. These last were restored to their father in 1794. A third son of Tipu, Prince Ghulam Muhammad, later settled down in the neighbourhood of Alipur (Calcutta). 'Many Englishmen have a pleasant recollection of the old Prince's hospitality; his entertainment of Viceroys at his residence; and his black horse with a long tail that swept the ground, as he took his leisurely morning canter round the race-course of Calcutta.'

The territorial distribution according to the Treaty of Seringapatam (18th March 1792) comprised the cession of the districts north of the Tungabhadra (western side) to the Marathas, and on the eastern side down to Kadappa (inclusive) to the Nizam. But the British were the greatest gainers. Coorg which was of great importance became a Protectorate; Dindigal (Madura District) and Baramahal and Rayakottai (Salem District) constituted an 'iron boundry for Coromandel'. V. A. Smith has pointed out that the districts left to Tipu were 'rugged and unproductive' in comparison with those of which he was deprived. 'It must be admitted,' writes Bowring, 'that, so far as the English Government were concerned, he (Tipu) faithfully discharged his obligations.' The British annexations under the treaty largely extended the area of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies. Cornwallis was rewarded for this achievement by promotion to the rank of Marquess. But General Medows was dissatisfied with the result, so far as Tipu was concerned: he would have liked to depose him in favour of the original Hindu Prince. Mr. Sullivan, the English Resident at Tanjore, 'sought to forward the views of his Government' by intriguing with the old royal family with a view to its restoration. In

this, combined with the rankling caused by the recent amputations of his territories, Tipu Sultan, if he needed any incitements, had enough provocation for further hostility towards the English.

The explosive combination of hatred and ambition was not confined to Tipu Sultan alone. The next great British proconsul to come out to India was a serious rival, in this respect to the restless 'Tiger of Mysore.' 'In plain words,' writes Sir Alfred Lyall, 'Lord Wellesley, to whom restless ambition was in Asiatics a thing intolerable, had already resolved to extend the British Protectorate over all the rulerships with which the English Government then had any connexion, by insisting that each ruler should reduce his army, and should rely for external defence and internal security mainly upon the paramount military strength of the British sovereignty.' His accomplishment of this objective–which is the subject of our study in the present section–is the real beginning of the period of 'Subordinate Isolation,' and not 1813 as suggested by Lee-Warner. At the close of his regime (1798-1805) the British House of Commons recorded in a Resolution: 'He has established on a basis of permanent security the tranquillity and prosperity of the British Empire in India.' The Imperial note sounded here, for the first time, emphasises very clearly that the British in India had by now superceded all the Indian powers in paramountcy. When Wellesley (then Lord Mornington) arrived in India (April 1798), the Marathas were still supreme in the Deccan and North India, while Tipu Sultan occupied a similar position in the South. When Wellesley left, in 1805, Tipu was dead, and Mysore had been reduced to a dependency; the Peshva had surrendered to the English, and the other Maratha chiefs were all but finally reduced to total subjection. These results were brought about by the deliberate pursuit of the 'forward' policy in spite of protestations to the contrary by Lord Mornington and writers like Lee-Warner. Their efforts to prove that all this was achieved in 'strict conformity with Pitt's India Act and subsequent legislation renewing the prohibition against ambitious designs,' says V. A. Smith, 'are not convincing.'

Wellesley's actions have been justified from their results. But to argue from the results to the aims is to put the cart

before the horse to justify the means by the ends. This is unhistorical. Tipu was described by Cornwallis as a "mad barbarian." Wellesley was convinced that sooner or later Tipu would take the offensive against the English whom he denounced as "oppressors of the human race." There could be little doubt that Wellesley acted with foresight and vigour to forestall his enemy. Yet to blame Tipu entirely for making the last Anglo-Mysore war "inevitable", and to call him an unmitigated savage, is no better than giving the proverbial 'dog' a bad name. Even Lyall speaks of Tipu as "a fierce, fanatic, and *ignorant* Mahomedan". Fierce and fanatical Tipu was undoubtedly, but not *ignorant*. With all his faults, 'he possessed a valuable library (which was removed to Calcutta after his overthrow), spoke Persian, Urdu and Kannada fluently, and as V. A. Smith has observed, "worked hard at the business of administration and wrote instructions on all subjects civil and military." Towards the end of 1797, writes Sir John Marriott, "with statesman-like grasp of the world-situation," he dispatched a mission to Mauritius to propose an aliance with the French Republic "for the expulsion of the English from India." The miscarriage of that project cannot justify the ridicule heaped upon its author by some writers, for a step which encouraged even Bonaparte and Talleyrand. "This also", observed Tallyrand, "offers us a chance of driving the English out of India by sending thither 15,000 troops from Cairo *via* Suez." But most historians have the incorrigible habit of being bigoted worshippers at the shrines of the successful. In their eyes there is no greater crime than failure. Nevertheless, there have been a few 'heretics' who have not failed to give the devil his due. James Mill, for example, wrote on Tipu's government:

> As a domestic ruler he sustains an advantageous comparison with the greatest prince of the East...He had the discernment to perceive, what is generally hid from the eyes of rulers in a more enlightened state of society, that it is prosperity of those who labour with their hands, which constitutes the principle and cause of the prosperity of States; he therefore made it his business to protect them against the intermediate orders of the community, by

whom it is difficult to prevent them from being oppressed. His country was accordingly, at least during the first and better part of his reign, the best cultivated, and its population the most flourishing in India; while under the English and their dependents, the population of the Karnatik and Oudh, hastening towards the state of deserts, was the most wretched upon the face of the earth.

The fact is that Mornington, by the time he was at the Cape of Good Hope, had a full and clear grasp of the vital points in the situation. England was already at war with France. There was every danger of Bonaparte and Tipu, if not also the other Indian powers, making common cause to drive the British out of India. Governor Macartney, Lord Hobart, and Major Kirkpatrick who happened to be at the Cape then, had 'primed' him (Mornington) well. Napoleon had written to Tipu from Cairo: "You have already been informed of my arrival on the Red Sea, with an innumerable and invincible army, full of the desire of delivering you from the iron yoke of England". On arriving in India, the Governor-General got other proofs of the enemies' intentions. On the day he landed on the east coast, a French contingent (though it was composed of no more than a hundred adventurous volunteers from Mauritius) had also arrived at Mangalore on the west coast. There was shortly afterwards an ominous disclosure of the French intentions and plans in one of the Calcutta newspapers. These proofs were more than Wellesley needed to make warlike preparations against Tipu Sultan. Despite the confession of unpreparedness* on the part of the Madras subordinates, the imperious Governor-General decided upon his famous campaign. He arrived in Madras on 31st December 1798, to direct the operations personally. On 9th January 1799, he wrote a letter to the Sultan, calling upon him to dismiss the French, to receive an English envoy, and to make terms with the Company and its allies. It was certain that Tipu would not tamely submit to such dicta-

1 Mr. Josiah Webb, Secretary to the Madras Government, dwelt on the lack of resources, military weakness, the bankruptcy of the Madras Presidency, and Tipu's strength...and the utter weakness of "our allies". "I can anticipate none but the most baneful consequences from a war with Tipu", he gloomily concluded.

tion. "He only replied to Mornington that he was going a-hunting. His cup was full. Mornington delayed no longer...On February 3, General Harris took the command: on 5th March, his troops entered the territory of Mysore."

The ground had been well and carefully prepared. As early as 12th August 1798, Wellesley had written a minute occupying 50 pages of the 'Despatches' in which he outlined his objectives thus:

> First, to seize the whole maritime territory remaining in his (Tipu's) possession below the Ghats on the coast of Malbar, in order to preclude him from all future communications by sea with his French allies. Secondly, by marching the army from the coast of Coromandel directly upon his capital, to compel him to purchase peace by a formal cession of the territory seized on the coast of Malbar. Thirdly, to compel him to defray our whole expense in the war, and thus to secure the double advantage of indemnifying us for the expense occasioned by *his aggression* (!), and of reducing his resources with a view to our future security. Fourthly, to compel him to admit permanent Residents at his Court from us and our allies, a measure which would enable us at all times to check his operations, and to countract the intricacies of his treachery Fifthly, that the expulsion of all the natives of France now in his service, and the perpetual exclusion of all Frenchmen, both from his army and dominions, should be made conditions of any treaty of peace with him.

'Our allies' referred to above were the Nizam and the Peshva. The latter entered into the Triple Alliance only as a passive member, for diplomatic reasons. The Nizam was won over in spite of his recent grievances at having been thrown to the wolves by the 'non-interventionist' policy of Sir John Shore. He had participated in the earlier war against Mysore as an ally of the English. Yet in 1795, when the Marathas attacked him, his former friends resiled from their engagement and betrayed him in the hour of dire need. Nevertheless he was once again persuaded to throw himself into the arms of the British. His defeat at Kharda (1795) and the heavy indemnity the Marathas exacted from him, and his betrayal by Sir John Shore, made the Nizam look to other

allies. He had built up a force of 14,000 troops trained by Frenchman Reymond, which he regarded as his bulkwark against the Marathas as well as Tipu. Wellesley did the trick. His *leger de main* and the adroit services of Malcolm, Roberts and Kirkpatrick brought about the disbanding of the army trained by the French,and the dismissal of all Frenchmen in the Nizam's service. In other words, the helpless ruler of Hydrabad 'inaugurated' the series of 'subsidiary alliances' (1st September 1798) for which Wellesley has become so famous. A British-officered force of 6,000 was to be maintained by the Nizam. By a subsequent revision of the treaty in October 1800, this force was increased to 10,000 and to meet the cost of its maintenance, the Nizam permanently ceded to the English all the territory he had recently acquired from Mysore by his participation in the late war against Tipu. Thereby the flank of the Madras Presidency was secured, and 'what had been a danger was turned into a support'.

The story of the war against Tipu is briefly told. It lasted hardly two months. General Harris marched upon Seringapatam with the utmost celerity. His army was 'unquestionably the best appointed, the most amply and liberally supplied, the most perfect in point of discipline, and the most fortunate in the acknowledged experience and abilities of its officers in every department, which ever took the field in India'. (W. H. Hutton). A Bombay contingent under General Stewart and the Nizam's forces, acted as auxilliaries. The seige of Tipu's capital began on 5th April. Major-General Baird (who had once been Tipu's prisoner) led the attack. 'In less than seven minutes from the period of issuing from the trenches the British colours were planted on the summit of the breach'. Tipu fell fighting valiantly in the defence of his capital. As his biographer, Mir Hussein Ali Khan Kirmani, has depicted the *denouement*: 'At the seventh hour from the morning, blood flowed from every wall and door, in the streets of Seringaputtum'. The Sultan 'courageous like a lion,...but at length having received several wounds in the face, drank the cup of Martyrdom.' 'On Saturday 28th *Zi Kad*, the day of Judgment manifested itself'. His body was later buried by the side of his father

Haidar Ali's in Lal Baug. The mausoleum is a handsome building, with ebony and ivory doors, 'the gift of Lord Dalhousie'.

No fewer than 8,000 of the defenders are said to have perished along with their Sultan. On the side of the besiegers the casualties were 892 Europeans (including 65 officers), and 609 natives. According to Bowring, 'this would show that the proportionate loss in the ranks of the former (i.e. Europeans) was about four times that in the native troops.' The booty captured in the palace included a magnificent throne, a superb *howdah*, curious and richly jewelled matchlocks and swords, solid gold and silver plate, costly carpets and chinaware, a profusion of fine gems, and a valuable library.* In the territorial distribution, the British kept for themselves, Seringapatam, Coimbatore, Kanara and Malabar; while the north-eastern districts were given to the Nizam, only to be retaken from him in 1800 (as mentioned above). Like Prussia in the third partition of Poland, the Marathas were offered a share in the spoils, even though they had not actively participated in the campaign; but the shrewd Nana Fadnavis prevented the Peshva from swallowing the bait to which were attached the terms of a 'Subsidiary Treaty' such as the Nizam had accepted. A boy (five years of age) of the old Hindu dynasty was installed on the throne of his ancestors, to rule over the central portions of Mysore, but under more rigid British control than was the case with the Nizam under the Subsidiary Treaty. The result may be summed up in the words of Wellesley's dispatch to the Directors, dated 3rd August 1799: His plans terminated in 'the establishment of a central and separate government in Mysore, under the protection of the Company,.. expedients best calculated to reconcile the interest of all parties, to secure the Company a less invidious and more efficient share of revenue, resource,

* The specie alone amounted to £480,000, while the jewels were valued at nine lakhs. The Library contained 44 vols. of the Quran and 41 Commentaries thereon; 115 Sufi MSS; 24 on Ethics; 95 on Jurisprudence; 19 on Arts and Sciences; 54 on Philosophy; 20 on Astronomy; 69 on Mathematics and Physics; 45 on Philology; 29 on Lexicography; 118 on History; 213 of Poetry; 53 Letters; etc. With the exception of a precious copy of the Quran, the rest of the library was transferred to the newly founded College at Fort William, Calcutta.

commercial advantage and military strength than could be obtained under any other distribution of territory or power, and to afford the most favourable prospect of general and permanent tranquillity in India.'

'The death of Tipu Sultan,' observes Sir John Marriott, 'removed from the Indian scene the most inveterate, the most implacable and the most fanatical, perhaps the most formidable enemy encountered by the Company in its contest with the *Native* Powers of India. But there was much in the career and character of Tipu, despite the vehemence of his anti-British sentiments, to extort respect and even admiration. If he had no more right than we had to claim territorial sovereignty in India, he had no less. If between ourselves and the French it was a war *a outrance*, so was it between Tipu and ourselves. We were equally adventurers in the field of India politics. If we had a right to seek the aid of the Nizam and the Peshva to subdue Tipu, Tipu had a right to call in the French to help in expelling us from the soil of India. We succeeded, he failed. But he displayed consistent courage, much persistence, and no little skill. While, then, we must rejoice in his defeat, we can respect his splendid effort to avert it.'

There were four distinct stages by which the policy of 'subordinate isolation' was implementrd by the Governors-General. In the first, the English lent a contingent of troops to assist a native prince; in the second, they took the field on their own account, assisted by the native troops; in the third, the native ally was required to supply not men but money with which to maintain a more efficient force than that lent by the princes; and lastly, while a British or British-trained force was imposed upon the 'Protected State,' its expenses were met from lands ceded for that purpose permanently to the British. As Lyall has pointed out, 'The subsidiary treaties made in India differed, therefore, from those made by England with European States in this respect, that whereas Austria or Russia raised armies on funds provided by England, Oudh or Hyderabad provided funds (later lands) on which the British Government raised armies.'

We found all these stages illustrated in the case of the Nizam. 'This bold stroke,' states V. A. Smith, 'instantly

reduced the Nizam to complete dependence on the Company and removed him from the list of powers whose enmity should be feared, or whose amity should be sought.' Yet Wellesley disguised this subordination by characterizing the relationship between the Nizam and the Company as having 'in fact become one and the same in interest, policy, friendship and honour.' The annexation of the Carnatic was declared by the Governor-General on 27th July 1801, on the ground of very serious maladministration,to which, however, the English had made no small contribution. We have noted before that the 'double government' in the Carnatic was infinitely worse than what it was in Bengal. Now the 'pot' suddenly discovered that the 'kettle' was blacker than itself. Further, incriminating evidence was 'discovered' in the Seringapatam papers after the capture of that place, just as Warren Hastings had done at Banaras against the Begums of Oudh, and with like consequences. That province was confiscated, leaving to the heir of the earliest ally of the British in India, a pension and the vain title of 'Nawab of Arcot.' Wellesley next turned to another early ally of the English, in the north, *viz*, the Nawab of Oudh. The result was only an amputation and not total annihilation.

Like Turkey in Europe, Oudh had been long ailing, at least since the death of Shuja-ud-daula. Warren Hastings had drawn the *cordon sanitaire* around that State. But even the 'non-interventionist', Sir John Shore felt constrained to interfere in its internal affairs, in the interests of settled if not also good government. Confusion was made worse confounded by the 'English locusts' as Wellesley called the parasites that were filling their own pockets greedily, ever since the time of Clive. 'Disaffection and anarchy,' wrote the Governor-General, 'prevail throughout, and nothing but the presence of our two brigades prevents insurrection.' Added to these conditions was the bogey of an Afghan invasion of Hindusthan by Zaman Shah, a grandson of Ahmad Shah Abdali. The pedigree of Zaman Shah, if not the reality of the situation, lent an air of plausibility to the 'menace apprehended by the Governor-General.The erstwhile 'buffer-state' was now described by Sir James Craig, Commander-in-Chief, as 'worse than useless, as dangerous, and of the nature

of an enemy's fortress in his rear.' The Nawab of Oudh was consequently, 'persuaded' to submit to a Treaty, on 10th November 1801, by which the English 'subsidiary' forces were considerably augmented. In the time of Sir John Shore, the Nawab paid Rs. 76,00,000 for the maintenance of 13,000 British troops. Now he was compelled to cede the whole of the Doab with Rohilkhand to the Company. 'The Nawab,' says Hutton, 'struggled like a bird in the net....' Then there was what Carlyle was fond of calling a 'pause of an awful nature'..the whole gamut of diplomacy had been run through. ...Another method was now adopted.' On 5th July 1801 Henry Wellesley (brother of the Governor-General) was dispatched to Lucknow to reinforce Colonel Scott and his troops 'with instructions to conclude the matter with rapidity.' The helpless Nawab had to yield. Wellesley regarded the arrangements advantageous and 'satisfactory to both the panties to it.' More detached critics, Marriott remarks, 'agreed that the end achieved was better than the means employed.' Hutton concludes: 'But, after all, the one cardinal justification of Wellesley's policy towards Oudh lies, not in any benefit to the population or in an extension of the Company's territory or revenue, but in an absolute political necessity....Wellesley found Oudh a pressing and unmistakable danger to the British position in India: he left it a safeguard and support.'

When all is said, the Marathas still remained—as in the time of Warren Hastings—'our one and only enemy.' Wellesley, in the words of V. A. Smith, was all along trying to 'induce all the Maratha chiefs to surrender everything which made life worth living in their eyes, and to accept his invitations, which so closely resembled those of the spider to the fly.' 'Hitherto,' wrote the Governor-General in 1800, 'either the capricious temper of Baji Rao (II), or some remains of the characteristic jealousy of the nation with regard to foreign relations, have frustrated my object and views.' But he had not to wait for long. The chief obstacle in the path, Nana Fadvanis—in whom were personified, according to the British Resident at Poona, Col. Palmer, 'all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government'—having been removed by

death, a state of civil war ensued.* Yasvantrao Holkar (successor to the great Ahilyabai and Tukojirao) overthrew the combined forces of Daulatrao Shinde (Mahadji's successor) and the Peshva in the battle of Poona on 25th October, 1802, and raised to the Peshva's *gadi* Amritrao, a natural brother of Bajirao II. The latter, therefore, following the example of his unpatriotic father, sought the help of the English at Bassein. The result was the Treaty of Bassein signed by the fugitive Peshva on the last day of the year 1802. It has been described by Marriott as 'the crown and completion of Lord Wellesley's subsidiary system.' By it, 'the Peshwa sacrificed his independence as the price of protection.' 'The compact purported to be a general defensive alliance, for the reciprocal protection of the territories of the Company, the Peshwa, and their respective allies.' The Peshva bound himself to pay Rs. 26,00,000 a year for the maintenance of a subsidiary force of not less than six battalions and to exclude from his service all Europeans 'of a nation hostile to the English.' The Peshva also renounced all claims over Surat, agreed to respect all the engagements between the Gaikwad and the British, and to submit to the arbitration of the British all his disputes with the Nizam or any other power. Bajirao was reinstated in Poona by British bayonets, on the 13th May 1803. Amritrao was allowed to retire to Banaras with a pension. The victors, however, very soon realised that they

* "In spite of suicidal conflicts, faithless friends and treacherous allies, Nana had controlled Maratha politics for thirty-eight years with conspicious ability and wisdom. He respected the English for their valour, their sense of discipline and their spirit of adventure, but he firmly rejected their offer of political alliance, seeing in such relations the certain loss of Maratha independence. No less a person than Wellesley appreciated the Poona statesman's stand. 'Nana,' he said,'has too much wisdom to involve the Maratha empire in such desperate connections.' His tribute to the great Maratha, though less widely known, is as eloquent as that of Palmer. The Governor-General wrote : 'The loss of persons distinguished for their talents, great qualities and abilities, is at all times a subject of regret. The melancholy news, therefore, of the death of Balaji Pandit, the able minister of your State, whose upright principles and honourable views, and whose zeal for the welfare and prosperity of both the dominions of his own immediate superiors and of others, were so justly celebrated, occasions concern."

—Kulkarni, *op. cit.* pp. 82-83.

had been more sanguine than the facts of the situation warranted. Arthur Wellesley had more shrewdly regarded the engagement with Bajirao as 'a treaty with a cipher.' Castlereagh, President of the Board of Control, considered it 'hopeless to attempt to govern the Maratha Empire through a feeble and perhaps disaffected Peshwa.' He prophesied that it would involve the English 'in endless and complicated distraction of that turbulent Empire.' Though Malcolm saw in the restoration of the Peshva the dawn of an era of tranquillity, prosperity, and peace, it inevitably meant 'peace only through war.' The other Maratha chiefs, particularly Shinde, Bhonsle of Berar or Nagpur), and Holkar would not tamely submit to British dictation. 'As surely as in the old days their claim to *chauth* had destroyed the Mughal power so surely would they be destroyed in their turn by the acceptance of subsidiary alliances.' The departure of Colonel Collins, the British agent in Shinde's camp on 3rd August, 1803, portended 'the shape of things to come.'

The second Anglo-Maratha War involved five sets of operations: three major ones, and two minor (in Bundelkhand and Orissa). The three principal operations were against Bhonsle, Shinde and Holkar, in the Deccan and Central India. The campaign opened with the capture of Ahmadnagar by Arthur Wellesley on 12 August 1803. It led on to the battle of Assaye (45 miles north of Aurangabad), on 23rd September, described by Grant Duff as 'a triumph more splendid than any recorded in Deccan history.' That was followed up by the capture of Burhanpur and Asirghar, and another victory over Bhonsla at Argaon, on 29th November. Gawilgarh was taken on 14th December. Three days later, Bhonsla signed the Treaty of Deogaon, by which he surrendered Cuttack to the English, and all lands west of the river Wardha, agreeing to receive a British Resident at Nagpur, not to entertain any subjects of countries at war with the British, to give up all claims to *chauth* on the Nizam, and to submit to British arbitration in all disputes.

In the north, General Lake occupied Aligarh on 4th September. On the 11th of the same month Delhi was entered and the Mughal Emperor taken in custody. Agra surrendered on 18th October. These rapid successes led to the battle of

Laswari on the 31st involving great slaughter. Hence Shinde was obliged to come to terms. The Treaty of Surji Arjangaon was signed on 30th December, 1803, by which the English acquired all the lands between the Jamuna and the Ganges and to the north of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Gohad. The other conditions already imposed upon the Peshva and Bhonsle also formed part of the treaty with Shinde. With great exultation the Governor-General declared: 'Peace is the fairest fruit of victory, the brightest ornament of military triumph, and the highest reward of successful struggle. The peace which has been concluded comprehends every object of the war with every practicable security for the continuance of security.' But as his biographer wrote, 'The Governor-General was too hasty. The fruits of peace were not yet ripe.'

Holkar was still at large. He threw down a challenge by the execution of three English officers in his service: Captains Vickers, Todd and Ryan. Negotiations having proved futile, on 16th April 1804, Wellesley ordered Generals Lake and Arthur Wellesley to begin operations against the ruler of Indore. At first all seemed to go well with the English. But when Lake retired to Cawnpore for the monsoon, his two subordinate Colonels, Murray and Monson, bungled. 'They seem to have been afraid of Holkar,' wrote Arthur Wellesley, 'and both have fled from him in different directions.' Disaster followed disaster, and Lake was constrained to admit 'I have lost five battalions and six companies, the flower of the army, and how they are to be replaced at this day, God only knows. I have to lament the loss of some of the finest young men and most promising in the army.' (2nd September, 1804 *Wellesley Despatches*, vol. iv, p.197). 'It was a lesson which native ballads long kept alive and which British officers did not soon forget.' Immediately it struck down the Governor General: he was recalled. Wellesley's programme had to wait till 1818 for its completion.

However, it was not 'roses, roses, all the way' for Holkar. He attempted but failed to take Delhi. He was defeated at Dig on 13th November 1804, and forced to retire into the Punjab. Nevertheless, Lake experienced another impressive set-back at Bharatpur. The fortified town, more than six

miles in circumference, well garrisoned and ably defended, resisted all the efforts of Lake, who indeed, as Wellington said, 'blundered terribly' and lost over three thousand men in his fruitless assaults. All the same, Bharatpur, along with the princes of Rajputana, entered into subsidiary engagements with the English. Though Wellesley was recalled, he had succeeded, to use his own words, in 'establishing a comprehensive system of alliance and political relation over every region of Hindustan and the Deccan.' With a prophetic vision he declared to Castlereagh, 'The Company, with relation to its territory in India, must be viewed in the capacity of a sovereign. If any other principle be recognised and the Company be permitted to hold the nominal sovereignty of India, endless confusion must ensue; in such an extremity no possible remedy could save this country from anarchy and ruin but the instantaneous assumption of the direct executive power of the British possessions in India by the Crown of the United Kingdom.' In the oft-quoted words of Sidney Owen 'there existed a British Empire *in* India,' before Wellesley's time; now, by his direct and indirect operations, the Company had acquired 'the Empire of India.'

'Lord Wellesley's settlement,' wrote Lyall in 1894, 'laid out the territorial distribution of all India (excepting the Punjab and Sind) on the general plan which was followed for the next forty years and which survives in its main outlines to this day.' His 'forward' policy which made the English supreme in India did not meet with the approval of his employers (the Company's Directors and Proprietors) whom Wellesley denounced as a pack of narrow-minded old women. But the attempts to impeach him were foiled by the more sympathetic Parliament. Ultimately the Company compensated him with a present of £ 20,000 and paid him the rare honour of erecting his statue in his own lifetime.

Lord Cornwallis was again sent out to India to reverse the 'forward' policy of Wellesley. He arrived in Calcutta on 30th July 1805. Wellesley embarked for England on 15th August. The new Governor-General was also to be his own Commander-in-Chief. His policy, as also that of his successors, Sir George Barlow and Lord Minto, will be discussed in the section dealing with the policy of 'non-intervention.'

Cornwallis died on 5th October the same year and was followed by Sir George Barlow, who in his turn was succeeded by Lord Minto in 1807. Minto's place was taken by Lord Moira (afterwards Marquess Hastings) in 1813. The next great spurt in the expansion of British dominion in India took place in the regime of Hastings (1813-1823).

Even so cautious and pacific an administrator as Sir George Barlow held that it was absolutely necessary that 'no Native State should be left to exist in India which is not upheld by the British Power, or the political conduct of which is not under its absolute control.' Yet the policy of 'non-intervention' pursued by Barlow, and to a lesser extent by Minto, left to Hastings a legacy comprising 'seven different quarrels likely to demand the decision of arms.' The Earl of Moria, observes P. E. Roberts, had been an opponent of Lord Wellesley's policy; yet he was destined to complete the fabric of British dominion in India 'almost as exactly at his great predecessor had planned it.' Hastings' objective was 'to render the British Government paramount in effect, if not declaredly so, to hold the other States as vassals, though not in name, and to oblige them, in return for our guarantee of their possessions, to perform the two great feudatory duties of supporting our rule with all their forces, and submitting their mutual differences to our arbitration.' 'He projected, in short,' says Lyall, 'the consummation of the work that had been begun by Lord Cornwallis and carried very far by Lord Wellesley—the extension of our supremacy and protectorate over every native State in the interior of India.'

Hastings' first task was to meet the situation created by the Gurkha incursions into the territories, occupied by the British or their tributaries, all along the northern boundary from the Sutlej to Bhutan. The possession of Gorakhpur by the Nawab of Oudh; since 1801, created in the Tarai (lowlands at the foot of the Himalayas) a hinterland full of occasions for friction between the Gurkhas and their neighbours. During the Governor-Generalship of Lord Minto the tracts occupied by the hillmen were cleared by the Company's troops without much difficulty. But in 1814, the murder of eighteen policemen in Butwal by the Nepalese brought on war.

Hastings was his own Commander-in-Chief. With his headquarters established in Lucknow, he made a bold bid for the total subjugation of the Gurkhas all along the line. But, unfortunately, four out of the five generals employed proved extremely incompetent, and the earlier expeditions met with disasters. The worst of them was the loss of General Gillespie, 'the hero of Java,' with whom were sacrificed no fewer than 740 men. Though the Gurkhas numbered less than half of the attacking force, they could not be dislodged from their mountain stockades. 'The discredit to our arms,' declared the Governor-General, 'and the baneful influence which this reverse must have upon future operations, are light in comparison to the loss of Major-General Gillespie...Deprived of him they will have to poke their way amid many errors and oversights before they attain such experience as may give them due confidence in themselves.' Nevertheless, General (Sir David) Ochterlony—the defender of Delhi against Holkar—soon retrieved the English position, and the war was brought to a successful termination, in March 1816, by the Treaty of Sagauli. The Nepalese surrendered important territories to the English, including Gharwal and Kumaon, which brought the valuable hill-stations of Simla, Dehra Dun Mussoorie, Naini Tal and Almora into British India. 'The clause requiring the admission of a British Resident at Khatmandu, the capital,' writes V. A. Smith, 'was more distasteful to the enemy than the loss of territory.' The Nawab of Oudh who had advanced two *crores* of rupees to the Governor-General during the most critical period of the war, and the Raja of Sikkim who occupied a strategical position between Nepal and Bhutan, were rewarded with the grant of some lands near their borders. The final boundary between Nepal and British India was later marked by masonry pillars, and the English, in lieu of the annual subsidy of two *lakhs* of rupees, gave back to Nepal the Tarai, and only retained such parts as were necessary to rectify the border line.

During the worst period of the Nepalese war, the Gurkhas had given a bad headache to the Governor-General by sending their emissaries far and wide: to Ranjit Singh, the Marathas, the Pindari chiefs, and the Courts of Burma and China. After the peace with Nepal was concluded, the

Gurkhas, far from being a source of anxiety to the British, became a pillar of support to their Empire, and Hastings was free to turn his full attention to his other enemies. The most dangerous of these, immediately, were the Pindaris. They were organised hordes of robbers—under their chiefs like Amir Khan and Chitu—who carried on their depredations from Rajputana in the west to Bihar in the east; they spread like locusts over Malwa and Bundelkhand, and devastated territories belonging to the Bhonsle of Nagpur and the Nizam as far as Cuttack and Guntur. Having failed to keep them out of the 'ring-fence', Hastings was determined to extirpate them by using all the resources at his command. He gathered together a huge army of 113,000 men and 300 guns, subdivided into the 'Army of Hindusthan' (4 divisions) under his own command, and the 'Army of the Deccan' (5 Divisions under Sir Thomas Hislop. Since the Pindaris were strongly suspected of being in league with the Marathas, a double cordon was placed round them: one facing inward to squeeze the robber bands, and the other facing outwards to prevent the Marathas helping them. This had the inevitable result of converting the Pindari-hunt into the Third Anglo-Maratha War; for trouble was already brewing to that end in the various parts of the Maratha dominions.

The Governor-General had a clear grasp of the situation, and he unequivocally declared: 'If there was no choice left, he should prefer an immediate war with the Marathas, for which he was fully prepared, to an extensive system of defence against a consuming predatory warfare, carried on clandestinely by the Maratha power, wasting our resources, till they might see a practical opportunity of coming to an open rupture.' Both his Council at Calcutta and the Home authorities were at first reluctant to enter into fresh hostilities with the Marathas, but the march of events forced their hands, and they aquiesced in the plans of the Governor-General. In October 1813, the Nawab of Bhopal, being attacked by the combined forces of Shinde and Bhonsle, asked for British assistance. Protection was offered to him, but later countermanded. Baroda was a 'subsidiary' State. In June 1814 its minister, Gangadhar Shastri was deputed to the Peshva—another British 'subsidary' chief—for the settlement

of some dispute between the two. But the negotiations were protracted, and the Shastri was treacherously murdered, in July 1815, by Trimbakji, a confidant of the Peshva. Elphinstone, British Resident in Poona, ordered Bajirao Peshva to apprehend the murderer and hand him over to Britsh custody. This heinous episode led eventually to the tightening of British control over the Peshva owing to his scandalous behaviour in this affair. Bajirao was deprived of even his titular headship of the Marathas by the revised treaty of 13th June 1817; the territories held by him outside Maharashtra were taken away from him; and he was obliged to admit that Trimbakji (Dengle) was the real murderer of Gangadhar Shastri.

In Central India, since Lake's campaign, the situation was very confused. Peace had been patched up hastily and on very unsound principles by Sir George Barlow, both with Shinde and Holkar, leaving the Rajput States completely exposed to the Maratha and Pindari attacks. Consequently, the Raja of Jaipur, with good reason, accused the Company of making 'its faith subservient to its convenience'. The situation is well depicted by Major Ross thus:

> The evil that grew there in such alarming proportions was no accidental circumstance;...it was the direct result of chronic anarchy, which arose from the inordinate and unchecked ambition indulged in by the native rulers. All these princes were scrambling for personal power, and not one of them was safe from the inroads of his neighbours; their councils were divided, and their tributaries in constant rebellion; their armies were continually clamouring for their pay, and their military leaders in a perpetual state of insubordination; they observed no duties, and they acknowledged no rights; society under their guidance was crumbling into ruins, and their subjects were pursuing their own selfish advantages. It was only natural, then, that men should combine to plunder and to devastate, and should continue to do so until there was a complete revolution in the native ideas of government.

Still it was Hastings' boast 'to have an earnest desire to accomplish everything by pacific means, and to be able to declare with sincerity, that the exclusive object of his present

preparations was to get rid of the greatest pest that society ever experienced.'

We have little need to describe the internal conditions of even the major States of this time. Suffice it to note that on the death of Jaswantrao Holkar, on 20th October 1811, the affairs of Indore fell into utter confusion in which Tulsibai (a mistress of the deceased Holkar) and the Pindari chief Amir Khan revelled. At Nagpur, Raghuji Bhonsle II having died in March 1816, Appa Saheb secured the regency (owing to the imbecility of Raghuji's son Parsoji) and entered into a subsidiary treaty with the British, on 27th May 1816. The circumstances in which the Peshva was compelled to submit to the revised Treaty of Poona (on 13th June 1817) have already been described. Daulatrao Shinde, too, fell on evil days and signed a new Treaty with the English on 5th November 1817. Yet all these engagements proved of little avail on account of the moral depravity of the chiefs who signed them. On the day on which Daulatrao Shinde put his signature to the subsidiary treaty renouncing his claims over the Rajputs, Bajirao attacked the British Residency at Poona. At the same time, Appa Saheb of Nagpur and Malharrao Holkar II of Indore, raised the standard of revolt against the English. The result was the defeat of all the rebels: Bajirao at Kirki (Khadki), Appa Saheb at Sitabuldi, and Holkar at Mahidpur (November-December 1817). Appa Saheb fled the country and died at Jodhpur in 1840. Nagpur was bestowed upon a minor son of Raghuji Bhonsla II. On 6th January 1818, Holkar made a fresh treaty (Treaty of Mandasor) with the English, by which he kept his seat at Indore, but was deprived of his claims on the Rajputs, relinquished his territory south of the Narmada, agreed to submit all his foreign relations to the British, and recognised Amir Khan (the Pindari chief*) as the Nawab of Tonk. The other Pindari chief, Chitu

* Amir Khan was a Pathan. Prinsep makes the following distinction between the Pathans and the Pindaris 'They commanded forces of a different description from those of the Pindaree chiefs... Indeed, the grand difference between the two classes was that the Pathans were banded together for the purpose of preying on Governments and powerful chiefs; To this end their forces moved about with the materials of regular battles and sieges, so as to work on the fears of princes and men in power extorting contributions and other advantages from them, by such intimidation as

was devoured by a tiger, and the predatory hordes were finally suppressed. Bajirao alone persisted in suicidal folly for some time, but was again defeated at Koregaon (on 1st January) and Ashti† (on 19th February 1818). On 3rd June 1818, he was finally deposed, and sent to Bithur, near Cawnpore, to live there a lotus eater's life' on an annual pension of eight *lakhs* of rupees, until his death on 14th January 1851. Elphinstone believed that 'if he (Bajirao II) were less deficient in courage, he would be ambitious, imperious, inflexible and persevering'. Though lacking in courage, he was handsome in appearance and possessed accomplishments like learning and eloquence. He could 'smile and smile and be a vallain'.§ As Wellesley had reinstated the Wodeyar in Mysore after the overthrow of Tipu Sultan, so Hastings tolerated a Chhatrapati at Satara, while the rest of the Peshva's territories were absorbed in the British dominions.

It is difficult to mark out the precise boundaries of the Maratha Dominions as they stood in 1795. Beginning with the *jagirs* of Poona and Supa, in the boyhood of Shivaji, they gradually reached the southern bank of the Jamuna in the

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an efficient army could only impress while the object of the Pindarees was universal plunder." Captain Sydenham wrote about the latter in 1809 : 'They avoid fighting for they come to plunder, and not to fight." According to Sir John Malcolm : 'Like swarms of locusts, acting from instinct,they destroyed and left waste whatever province they visited.'

† Bapu Gokhale who died fighting valiently in this battle was the last hero of independent Maharashtra. General Smith who fought against Bapu Gokhale and killed him in action wrote to Eliphinstone : 'He really fought like a soldier.'

§ The infamous Peshva Bajirao II was a contrast in every respect to the Maratha heroes 'in the brave days of old.' He spent the last thirty. three years of his life 'dividing his hours between religious performances and dissipation' "It is impossible to render the tributes of tears,' writes Kulkarni, "which fallen greatness so spontaneously evokes, to a man who so deliberately destroyed a great heritage Perhaps the British Government's decision to abolish the office of Peshwa was right. Of what use could it be after the treaty of Bassein ? Like many other princes, a subordinate Peshwa would probably have attempted to another the growth of nationalism in his state and thus prevented. Maharashtra from playing a leading part in the struggle for the couhtry freedom. Bajirao's exit was, therefore, a national gain. His adopted son, Dhondo Pant Nanasaheb figured prominently in the uprising of 1857."

North to the northern bank of the Tungabhadra in the South, and included most of the territories between Cutch and Kathiawar in the West to Orissa in the East. Out of the vast territory thus indicated we have to exclude the Nizam's Dominions, south of the Wainganga-Godavari line in the North and the Tungabhadra-Krishna line in the South. The coastal strip of the Northern Sarkars, from Guntur to Cuttack, was also outside the Maratha Dominions. Approximately the western half of the Deccan plateau belonged to the Marathas, and the eastern half to the Nizam. This comprised, in its totality, practically the whole of the later State of Bombay, plus the western parts of the Nizam's Dominions (covering Aurangabad and Bidar), C.P. and Berar, western parts of the Andhra country, the Mahanandi delta (from Balasor to Cuttack), Bundelkhand and Central India, and the eastern parts of Rajaputana. Besides these, Mahadji Shinde held Delhi and Agra, with the Mughal Emperor in his custody. Most of the non-Maratha chiefs of Kathiawar, Rajputana (including the major ones like Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kotah, Bundi, Ajmer, etc.), Sitamau in Malwa, and the eastern States of Sirguja (Bastr, Nandgaum, Khairgarh, etc.) were tributaries of the Marathas. Before the battle of Panipat (1761) they had held Lahore and portions of the Punjab; but these were permanently lost after that military disaster. In the North they carried their depradations into Rohilkhand, Oudh and Bihar, and the East up to Calcutta (on account of which the 'Maratha Ditch' was constructed by the English for their self-protection). Down in the South, the estates in Mysore were lost with the rise of Haidar and Tipu, and Tanjore and other Maratha principalities of Shahaji's time were absorbed by the English under Wellesley (1799).

These Maratha Dominions were, of course, never under a single centralised or unified authority or government. They were shared between the Peshva, Gaikwad, Shinde, Holkar, Bhonsle (of Nagpur), and Pawar etc. who nominally owned allegiance to the Chhatrapati, but were in reality masters in their respective spheres of influence. The House of the Chhatrapati itself was divided between Satara and Kolhapur.

On the west coast, the Maratha possessions were delimited to Salsette, Bassein, Surat, etc., which were soon to be eclipsed by the English settlements of Bombay. Thus ended the shortlived hegemony of the Marathas over the larger part of India.

CHAPTER XV

AN EPILOGUE

THIS is a pendant to the garland of glorious gems strung together in the narrative of the Maratha fight for freedom recalled in the foregoing pages. The Sunset of the Peshva Power was not less tragic than that of the Mughal Empire which it attempted to replace. Baji Rao II who died on 2 th January 1851 (thirty-three years after his deposition) was a pitiable figure in every respect. The pathos of his end is reflected in a *povada* which bewails:

'Never, oh never, has such a fate fallen
on any of Balaji Vishvanath's house;
Elephants, horses, camels, treasure,
all are being left behind;
What a fate has Bajirao to
bear now in life!'

Whatever his personal blemishes and blunders, in the hearts of the Marathas, the fate that overtook him symbolised the calamity of Maharashtra as a whole. It inevitably recalled to their minds the agonising days that followed the death of Sambhaji in 1689. But then Maharashtra was virile and vigorous. The inspiration of Shivaji and his organisation of the army and state was still in a condition to meet the crisis with courage and stamina. Even later, the Great Bajirao I had filled Maharashtra with unbounded hopes and ambition. They had not only survived the holocaust of Panipat in 1761, but reached the acme of political power under Madhavrao I, Mahadji Shinde and Nana Fadnavis. Sir Alfred Lyall wrote: 'On the whole, there is good ground for the opinion that, if, at the time of the dissolution of the Mughal Empire, if the Europeans had not just appeared in the field, the whole of Southern and Central India would have fallen under the Maratha dominion. It was very fortunate for the English that they did not come into collision with such antagonists until their own strength had matured; since there can be no

doubt that throughout the larger stage of the tournament for the prize of ascendancy between England and the native powers, our most dangerous challengers were the Marathas.' The obverse of this appraisal of the situation was equally true. Unfortunately the Marathas after the death of Nana Fadnavis (1800) were confronted with the might of the English when they were fully mature, politically as well as industrially. The far-reaching implications of this contrast and inequality were not realised at the moment by the country, but the realities of the situation were soon to be demonstrated in the next great 'show-down', in the happenings of 1857-58. For the time being the land was simmering with increasing discontent during the forty years between the fall of the Peshvas (1818) and the explosions of the Great Rising (1857). The wider aspects of this uprising, though important from the point of view of our national history, are not our immediate concern here. Briefly, I have touched upon them in an earlier work.* P. E. Roberts has expressed the view that 'the attempt to summon back the ghost of Maratha supremacy was, as it were, only the political second thought of the Mutiny, and came too late for success, when the back of the rebellion was broken and the cause of the insurgents was obviously vaning'. Yet the fact remains that it was the last desperate effort made by Indian India to recover its lost heritage. The Peshva's representative (Nana Saheb) and the last of the Mughal Emperors (Bahadur Shah) were the prominent rallying centres of this national upheaval. They were at once the tools and architects of the nation's will to be free from the galling yoke of the foreigners. Though they failed, they failed heroically, leaving a trail of glorious memories behind them. I make no excuse in reproducing the following excerpt from *The Making of Modern India* (pp. 487–88) where I have thus summed up the true nature of this holocaust:

"It was consoling to contemporary Englishmen to call the great upheaval 'mutiny'. That simple designation put it on a par with the several risings previously known, and served to throw the blame on 'the other fellows', guilty of the palpable breach of army discipline. Since, this time, it was on an unprecedented scale, it also justified the executions

* *The Making of Modern India*, 482-92, Orient Longmans.

(hangings and blowings from the guns 'in oriental fashion') *en masse*. But what of Bahadur Shah, the Emperor, Tatya Tope, the Hereward the Wake and Robin Hood of the rising, Nana Saheb, adopted son of Bajirao II, and claimant to the title of Peshwa, Laxmibai, Rani of Jhansi, 'the best and bravest of the rebel leaders' as Sir Hugh Rose (who fought against her) called her, and Kumar Singh of Jagdishpur (Bihar), Maulavi Ahmad Shah of Fyzabad who 'had twice foiled Sir Colin Campbell,' and a host of others who were real leaders of the Great Rising, and yet were not 'sepoys' to be court-martialled. Colonel Malleson writing about the Maulavi says:

> If a patriot is a man who plots and fights for the independence, wrongfully destroyed, of his native country, then most certainly the Moulvie was a true patriot. He had not stained his sword by assassination, he had connived at no murders; he had fought manfully, honourably, and stubbornly in the field against the strangers who had seized his country and memory is entitled to the respect of the brave and true-hearted of all nations.

There were thousands of others, Hindus and Muslims, who participated in the great struggle, and merited such praise. None of them were required to bite the polluting cartridge which is supposed to have caused the deluge of blood, Indian and British, during well nigh two years."

To the above might be added the following candid observations of Mr. Perceval Spear (Fellow of Selwyn College Cambridge). He writes in his *Twilight of the Mughals* (p. 226):

> It cannot be maintained, therefore, that the King (Bahadur Shah) was, in any Indian juridical sense, *subject* of the British Government. He waged war and he allowed, albeit unwillingly and under duress, British women and children to be killed in his palace. But he was no *rebel* against constituted authority. He had broken no pledge, violated no treaty, committed no treachery; he had merely exercised rights which Indian opinion had conceded to his ancestors through eleven generations. He should probably have been treated as a hostile ruler, whose dominions might be liable to annexation and whose person might be

subject to detention. In fact the Government were misguided enough to try him as a rebel, wise enough to treat him as a defeated prince, and foolish enough to mingle indignities with their measures of precaution. Indian opinion never regarded him as a *rebel*, and always considered him to have been ill-used in his detention in Delhi and his exile in Rangoon. A halo of martyrdom and an aura of romantic sympathy collected round the aged figure (of 82 years) who would otherwise have been regarded as an unfortunate plaything of destiny. His poetry kept alive this memory; the plaintive *gazls* of the King proved more effective weapons against the British than all the guns of the mutineers.

'Dumdumāymen dam nahin
Khair māngo jānkī,
Ai Zafar thandī huī
shamshēr Hindustānkī'

('There is no vitality left in your person, the sword of Hindusthan has become ineffective!')

To this poetic wail, the octagenarian Bahadur Shah vigorously responded:

'Ghāzionmen bu rahēgī
jabtalak imānkī
Tabto Londontak chalēgī
tēg Hindusthānkī!'

('So long as our heroes have a sense of honour left in them, the sword of Hindusthan will reach London itself!')

Since we are here chiefly concerned with the Founding of Maratha Freedom, we shall confine our attention to the role of Maharashtra in the last phase of the struggle ending in 1858. It will be clear from what follows that the martyrs who laid down their lives during this eventful war of Indian independence were not unworthy successors to the heritage of the heroes who made Maratha history in the past. Among them we can find room in this brief epilogue only for a few well known figures as illustrative of the *spirit* which fired them despite the criticism that has been levelled against some of their actions in the context of a life-and-death struggle for existence. 'Revolutions', as Nizam-ul-mulk frankly and

realistically confessed, 'are not made with rose-water'. This is not to gloss over such crimes or misdeeds that were alleged to have been committed by Nana Saheb, for instance; but only to put ourselves in the historical position that provoked or incited the revolutionaries to 'make no bones' of ethical considerations. They were not diplomats debating academic aspects of political issues of vital importance to the parties involved. There were 'atrocities' on either side that deserve to be condemned—*not condoned*– on sheer *humane* grounds. But the crisis too was a *human* crisis: calling for 'blood and iron' retaliation which left little room for finer susceptibilities at the moment of action. This criterion holds good for all those who were caught up in that titanic struggle—the British no less than the Indian. The difference between the two, however, was that between the foreigners ('who had wrongfully destroyed the independence of the country'—to use Colonel Malleson's candid expression quoted before) and patriots fighting for the liberation of their own motherland.

Nana Saheb 'vanished' rather than fell fighting. What is of immediate relevance to us here is—as we said before—the *spirit* which fired him and his other countrymen rankling with the recent wounds sustained by the Marathas. In order to feel *en rapport* with the 'rebels' we have to recapitulate a few at least of the outstanding antecedents that proved particularly galling. We shall, for obvious reasons, confine ourselves here to the Marathas apart from the facts relating to the Mughal Emperor on account of his special importance in our context. The Emperor and the Peshva fought and failed together.

First about the fate of the last occupant of the throne of Babur, Akbar, and Aurangzeb: Bahadur Shah. The East India Company had acquired the *Diwani* from the Mughal Emperor in 1765. In 1803 the blind old Shah Alam came into the custody of the British. In 1813, Lord Hastings expressed his fixed determination to make an end 'of the fiction of the Mughal government.'.... the phrase denoting Imperial supremacy was removed from his seal. No more ceremonial gifts were offered to the Emperor in the Governor-General's name ... In 1835, the coinage of Bengal ceased to be

struck in the name of the Emperor, whose titles had continued to appear on the Company's rupees till that year. Then it was resolved to induce the Imperial family to remove from the old palace of Delhi to a new residence near the Qutb Minar: and at last, Canning decided no longer to recognize the Imperial title after the demise of the existing Emperor Bahadur Shah. Finally, (after the Great Rising 1857) he was deposed and deported to Rangoon as a State-prisoner to sigh away his last days like Napolean at St. Helena.

The fate of the last incumbants to the title of *Peshva* and *Chhatrapati* was not unlike that of the Mughal Emperor.

'The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things.'

In 1818, as we saw, Peshva Bajirao II was sent to Bithur (U.P.) as a pensioner after his final overthrow at Poona. He lived there in his exile in great luxury on the eight *lakhs* annual stipend allowed him by his British conquerors, with the title of *Peshva* he was still permitted to enjoy. In social life he maintained his State dignity despite the indignities of his political fall. Before his death in 1851 he had adopted Nana Saheb as his son and successor. But, as Aurangzeb declared in his last days: 'In a moment, in a twinkling, the world changes !' Nana Saheb was allowed to keep his patrimony (financial legacy) but denied the pension and the title of *Peshva* with its political implications. This was in keeping with the trend of British policy reflected in the treatment of the Mughal Emperor indicated above. Since the fall of Tipu Sultan in the south, and that of the Peshva in the Deccan, there was a definite turn in the tide of affairs. It is progressively illustrated by the rising tempo of the aggressive steps taken by successive British plenipotentiaries in India. Dalhousie's doctrine of 'lapse' was a definite pointer in the direction of what Maharaja Ranjit Singh is supposed to have foretold: '*sab lal ho jāygā.* I have indicated the bearings of his policy of annexation elsewhere (*The Making of Modern India*, *p.* 43ff).Here I shall refer only to its incidence in Maharashtra and its repercussions elsewhere. Apart from the Peshva, Satara and Nagpur: both represented the 'House of Shivaji' (Bhosles).

The Raja of Satara was in the direct line of the founder of Maratha *Svarajya*: Shivaji the Great. In 1818, the British in order 'to huddle the war (with the Marathas) to a finish,' thought it expedient to reinstate the Raja in his principality of Satara. But once they were assured of their ascendancy as the Paramount Power, they began to have second thoughts, So on 30th January 1837, Sir Robert Grant, Governor of Bombay, wrote: 'An opinion is now very commonly entertained that the erection of Satara into a separate principality was a mistaken proceeding. It is at least clear that this principality includes the finest part of the Deccan, and by its position most awkwardly breaks the continuity of the British territory. There are those, therefore, who will hail the present crisis as affording an excellent opportunity of repairing the error alluded to, by pulling down the inconvenient pagent we have erected.' This was actually done in 1848, when the ruler died without heir, and Dalhousie refused to recognize the adopted son.

Nagpur followed suit, despite the warning of Sir John Low (member of Dalhousie's Council) that 'the confidence of our Native allies was a good deal shaken by the annexation of Satara.' Elphinstone regarded it as '*monstrous*', and felt that 'the injustice done to this family' would affect and alarm every sovereign state in India. The treatment accorded to the ruling family of Nagpur (in 185+) evoked from P.E. Roberts the just criticism that 'the public auction of jewels and furniture of the royal house (of Bhosle), which made such an unfortunate impression, was a *tactless blunder* and one that might have been avoided.' To speak of only one more minor Maratha principality, Jhansi was annexed in 1853. The repercussions of this egregious crime reverberated throughout the land and, after the holocaust of 1857, immortalized the valiant Lakshmibai, Rani of Jhansi, as the symbol of Mother India crushed under the heel of the hated foreigners.

We cannot, in this brief epilogue, dwell upon all the exciting details of the fiery ordeal through which the country passed during the crisis of 1857-58. The metamorphosis of Lakshmibai, in the very dawn of her youth, into a martyr for freedom, by the sheer force of circumstances, is typical of the situation. She was a spiritual descendant of the gal-

lant women of Maharashtra that 'fought like tigresses on the battlefield' during the Khalji incursions into the Deccan, as recorded by a Muslim chronicler, reminding us of Shivaji's mother Jijabai, the irrepressible Tarabai (wife of Rajaram) and others less known to fame: mothers of the Makers of Maharashtra during the memorable epochs of the fight for freedom outlined in this volume.

Of the other heroes who made history for their motherland in the middle of the nineteenth century we shall cite here only three more: *viz.* Nana Saheb, Tatia Tope and Azimullah with some of their associates.

It was no mere accident that Hindus and Muslims, Marathas and non-Marathas, men as well as women, fought shoulder to shoulder in this national struggle for free and honourable existence.

Among them were also peasants, artisans, *moulavis*, *sadhus*, talukdars and others of all castes, classes and ranks. A close study of the facts of the case reveals startling aspects of the situation unheard of or suspected in superficial histories. Savarkar's epoch-making book (*The Indian War of Independence:* 1857) affords for unbiased readers a few of those hair-raising glimpses given through citations mostly from British and contemporary sources. The rhetorical style and the impulse to dramatise incidents are features incidental to the genesis of the work; but the basic framework of facts on which the tapestry is woven are drawn from the British writers listed in Savarkar's Bibliography. To indicate the author's candor we have only to cite his considered verdict on the failure of the War of Independence. He writes: 'If there had been set clearly before the people at large a new ideal attractive enough to captivate their hearts, the growth and completion of the Revolution would have been as successful and as grand as its beginning.... The Revolution worked out successfully as far as the destructive part was concerned; but, as soon as the time for construction came, indifference, mutual fear, and want of confidence sprang up.' The importance of this critical diagnosis to our present purpose is obvious: History has its *inspirations* not less than its *warnings*.

To resume the story :— The gathering storm showed sur-

face tensions as well as subterranean symptoms. As in an impending earthquake or volcanic eruption, the latter, though unseen, were more dangerous. Apart from the underground or behind-the-screen activities of the conspirators, like court intrigues and the mysterious 'lotuses',* there were secret confabulations everywhere-in India as well as England and elsewhere abroad.

The hand of Nana Saheb was seen in most of these by the British. They had found him outwardly very affable. Sir George in his *Cawnpore*: 'Nothing could exceed the cordiality which he constantly displayed in his intercourse with our countrymen. The persons in authority placed an implicit confidence in his friendliness and good faith, and the ensigns emphatically pronounced him a capital fellow.' Nevertheless, his unjust dispossession and the enormities of Dalhousie's imperial acts unhinged patriots of his calibre, and the happenings which followed were a direct outcome of this.

Two important men served to implement his purposes. They were Azimullah Khan, a Muslim, and Tatia Tope, a Marathi Brahman. The former was Nana's talented emissary who went to England, and later travelled extensively in Europe, to enlist sympathy on behalf of Nana Saheb. Azimullah also met Rango Bapuji who had proceeded to London

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* 'For months, for years indeed, they had been spreading their network of intrigues all over the country. From one native court to another, from one extremity to another of the great continent of India, the agents of the Nana Sahib had passed with overtures and invitations discreetly, perhaps mysteriously worded, to princes and chiefs of different races and religions, but mostly hopefully of all to the Marathas...There is nothing in my mind more substantiated than the complicity of Nana Sahib in widespread intrigues before the outbreak of the Mutiny. The concurrent testimony of witnesses examined in parts of the country widely distinct from each other takes this story altogether out of the regions of the conjectural," Kaye's *Indian Mutiny*, Vol I, pp 74-75 (cited by Savarkar).

"A man appeared with a lotus flower and handed it to the chief of the regiment. He handed it on to another; every-man took it and passed it on and, when it came to the last, he suddenly disappeared to the next station. There was not, it appears a detachment, not a station in Bengal, through which the lotus flower was not circulated. The circulation of this simple symbol of conspiracy was just after the annexation of Oudh."

—*Narrative of the Mutiny*, p. 4 (cited by Savarkar.)

to argue the case of the Raja of Satara who was in a like predicament. Thus, quite unexpectedly a representative of the Peshva and a representative of the Chhatrapati, both met on foreign soil seeking justice for their principals in India.... After all his futile endeavours abroad, Azimullah returned to Nana Saheb and joined hands with him in the titanic struggle. If he was of vital use in the organization of the widespread conspiracy, Tatia Tope worked openly as the gifted right-hand man of Nana Saheb leading his armed forces. His acts of gallantry made him famous as the Robinhood of Maharashtra. But here we can do no more than allude to his military successes that, despite his heroism and undoubted capacity and resourcefulness, proved futile in the face of the better equipped and better led British forces. His lightning movements remind us of the Grand Strategist Shivaji. His triumphs in individual actions is reflected in the following citation from Charles Ball's *Indian Mutiny* (Vol.II, p.190):

'You will read the account of this day's fighting with astonishment; for it tells how English troops, with their trophies and their mottoes and their far-famed bravery, were repulsed and they lost their camp, their baggage and position to the scouted and despised natives of India! The beaten Feringhis, as the enemy have now a right to call them, have retreated to their entrenchments amidst overturned tents, pillaged baggage, men's kits, fleeing camels, elephants and horses, and servants. All this is most melancholy and disgraceful.'

We may fittingly close this epilogue with a brief reference to the martyrdom of Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi. She was barely twenty-three years of age when she fell heroically fighting against the most formidable forces mustered by the British. Sir Hugh Rose, the English Commander who fought against her, truly declared: 'She was the bravest and best *man* (!) on the side of the Mutineers.' No higher encomium could be paid her from a martial point of view. She was a worthy star in the galaxy of the gallant heroines like Chand Bibi of Ahmednagar, Rani Durgavati of Gondwana,and Kittoor Chennamma of Karnatak. On the civil side, too, she had shown the sagacity of an Ahilyabai Holkar. For a fuller portrait of her personality and genius one must go to her biographies. Our limited scope here permits us only to refer to her role

as a fighter for freedom, though in the circumstances of her situation it proved an unavailing fight. Her defence of Jhansi and her flight to Kalpi and Gwalior irresistibly remind us of the 'brave days of old' when Maharashtra fought valiantly: particularly of Shivaji's exploits during his fight against Aurangzeb and the Adil Shah In this *denouement* of the glorious holocaust we find the Rani and Tatia Tope fought shoulder to shoulder in defence of their historic inheritance in Maharashtra. In the words of Colonel Malleson: "How the 'impossible' happened has been told.... He (Sir Hugh Rose) realized, moreover, the great danger which would inevitably be caused by delay. No one could foresee the extent of evil possible if Gwalior were not quickly wrested from rebel hands. Grant them delay, and Tatia Tope, with the immense acquisition of political and military strength secured by the possession of Gwalior, and with all its resources in men, money and material at his disposal, would be able to form a new army on the fragments of that beaten at Kalpi, and to provoke a Maratha rising throughout India. It might be possible for him, using the dexterity of which he was a master, to unfurl the Peshva's banner in the Southern Maratha districts. Those districts were denuded of troops, and a striking success in Central India would probably decide their inhabitants to pronounce in favour of the cause for which their fathers had fought and fled.'*

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* *Indian Mutiny*, Vol. V, pp. 149-50.

CHAPTER XVI

MARATHA POLITY

IN THE foregoing pages we noticed the rise, progress and culmination of the Maratha power, beginning with the small *jagir* of Poona and ending in an Empire that included the greater part of India for some time. The character of the polity aimed at or created by the Marathas during the period of their supremacy is a subject of controversy among scholars. British writers like Grant Duff and V. A. Smith looked upon the rise of the Maratha power as a parasitical growth which was the outcome of predatory warfare encouraged by the decadence of the Muhammadan powers. Maratha writers, led by the late Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade, on the other hand, ascribe to the builders of the Maratha Empire high and noble national ideals which they tried to corroborate with the help of suggestive evidence. Among renowned scholars of the present day, Sir Jadunath Sarkar showed strong inclinations towards the former group, and Rao Bahadur Sardesai towards the latter school. It must, however, be noted that Sarkar has written enough by way of appreciation and Sardesai enough by way of criticism, that each one of them might protest against the categorical classification suggested above. Nevertheless, the balance of their judgment or verdict will be found, on impartial examination, to be not different from our characterization here. We shall cite the evidence without anticipating the conclusions.

The British characterization of the Marathas was vitiated by two inherent factors: (i) prejudice born of their having been recent enemies, and (ii) their lack of acquaintance with the real sources of information. Indian writers who have largely depended on Mughal and European sources have also been incurably biased; they have failed to appreciate the value of Maratha sources which have come to light in more recent times. It is obvious common sense that too much emphasis on hostile witnesses is bound to warp the judgment. Of course, it is equally necessary that too high a premium ought

not to be set upon patriotic literature which is likely to be uncritically sentimental. But there can be no true historical insight without sympathy. Indeed there is considerable force in Dr. S. N. Sen's argument: 'It is very difficult to understand how an Empire could last for over a century and half by robbery and plunder alone,' he writes, 'unless it had a surer and firmer basis of good government.' It is equally patent that its passing away was due to certain fatal weaknesses and defects to which we should not remain blind. We shall first try to understand the basic qualities; then we shall examine the criticism.

From the point of view of the evolution of modern India, there is a vital interest attaching to the study of Maratha Polity. As Dr. Sen has pointed out, the Marathas derived their institutions and ideas from their Hindu and Muslim predecessors, and such a study 'supplies an important and interesting illustration of interaction of Hindu and Muslim principles on each other, and it helps us to understand the growth of the present British Indian administrative institutions, partly engrafted as they are on older Hindu and Muhammadan systems.'

Our account of Maratha Polity to be authentic must make use of the following among other contemporary materials: (1) *Adnapatra* by Ramachandra Amatya; (2) *Rajavyavaharakosha* attributed to Raghunath Pandit; (3) the account of Sabhasad with additions on the duties of the Secretariat officer by Chitragupta, and (4) the *Peshva Daftar*.

The Political System of the Marathas has not been so closely studied as the Mughal and British systems, though it was sandwiched between the two. It is necessary to distinguish between *Svarajya* and *Samrajya* for this purpose. The former referred to the homelands of the Marathas, and the latter to the territories outside Maharashtra. The provinces of the Mughal Empire overrun by the Marathas were called *Mughlai*. The two divisions were not treated on equal terms. *Svarajya* was better organized than the *Samrajya* or *Mughlai*. The reason for this was that the homelands differed from the conquered territories in important respects. In the first place, the Maratha country was directly under the Chhatrapati's and Peshva's administration, and for a longer time, so

that it afforded fuller scope for the evolution of settled government. Secondly, ethnically and culturally, it was more homogeneous than the far-flung dominions. Thirdly, the process of conquest was so prolonged and partial, and the conditions obtaining in the different parts of the country were so varied, that harmonious and complete assimilation was not to be expected. The conquered territories were only gradually brought into approximate conformity with the pattern of the home government. The extent and speed with which this was done depended on the proportion of the Maratha population transplanted and settled in the new provinces. Since this varied from one part of the country to another, there were bound to be differences in the character of the Maratha administration in different parts of the Empire. To cite the most prominent examples: Baroda, Indore, and Gwalior, have each some local colour that serves to distinguish it from the others. Tanjore in the Tamil country, Baroda in the Gujarati setting, and the Central Indian States in a totally different atmosphere, could not be expected to answer exactly to the pattern of either Kolhapur or Poona. Besides, in a monarchical and semi-feudal world, the personal factor counted for much. The administrative system of a warrior like Mahadji Shinde, for example, could not be identical with that of the peaceful and statesmanlike Ahilyabai Holkar; nor that of Shahu anything like the system built up by the genius of his gifted grandfather Shivaji. Even in the family of the Peshvas there were variations from generation to generation: the greatest administrators among them were Balaji Bajirao and Madhavrao I. Others no doubt made their own contributions, but we shall assess these in the last part of this chapter,

The Maratha political system was partly the creation of Shivaji and partly that of the Peshvas. We can roughly ascribe the organization of *Svarajya* to the former and of the *Samrajya* to the latter. Under Shivaji there was greater centralization than was found possible under the Peshvas. With the exception of the appanage of Tanjore, Shivaji conquered only as much as he could directly and personally administer with the help of ministers and other officers appointed, supervised and controlled by himself. His

compact and close-knit kingdom was organized and governed on principles partly borrowed or adapted from his contemporary world (both Hindu and Muslim), and partly inspired by the ancient traditions of the country, modified by practical and rational considerations. This will become apparent as we proceed with the detailed examination of the various departments and aspects of Maratha administration; but we may refer here in advance to a few general features.

Though Shivaji could not escape from the use of the Persian language and the Muslim designations of some of his officers, his political system was moulded by Hindu thought and tradition. His *Svarajya* was established over the *mulk-i-qadim*, but it was not characterized by the spirit of *dar-ul Islam*. *Maharashtra Dharma* was territorial, not religious: i e. unlike his Muslim contemporary Aurangzeb, Shivaji did not condition the protection and privileges afforded to various classes of his subjects by the religion they professed. But more about this later.

Neither in Hindu theory, nor in the Islamic, was the king or head of the State above law. *Dharma* ruled all, from the king to the meanest peasant. But subject to this overall limitation, the Chhatrapati was supreme in the Maratha State. He continued to be so in theory even when, after the death of Shahu, he was reduced to a cipher by the Peshvas. He was, according to Shivaji's system, assisted by a Council of Eight Ministers (Ashta-Pradhans): (1) Mukhya Pradhan (Peshva), (2) Amatya (Mujumdar), (3) Mantri (Waqia-navis), (4) Sachiv (Shuru-navis), (5) Sumant (Dabir), (6) Pandit Rao (Sadr), (7) Nyayadhish (Qazi-ul-quzat), and (8) Senapati (Sar-i-naubat) [When Rajaram was at Ginji he created the new office of Pratinidhi (Naib), while the homeland was placed under the charge of Ramchandra Amatya who was styled Hukmatpanah (Dictator). These changes showed that Maratha Polity was not static but dynamic; it could adjust itself to changing requirements. But, in the course of time, the changes did not always turn out for the better. The Council of Ministers was, in the time of Shahu, superseded by the Peshvas who rapidly eclipsed the Chhatrapati on the one side, and the other colleagues of the Raj-Mandal (Ashta-Pradhans) on the other. 'The change,' writes M. G. Ranade, 'meant the conversion of

the organic whole into an inorganic mass, and it reproduced the old Mahomedan methods of single rule, against which Shivaji had successfully struggled when he organised the Raj-Mandal.' It is a misnomer to describe the Council of Eight as a 'cabinet'.* It had none of the attributes of a modern democratic cabinet. They had no joint responsibility and, under Shivaji, they were all equally dependent on the will of the sovereign. When the Peshvas reduced the Chhatrapati to a nonentity they paved the way for their example to be copied by other officers.

Shivaji had tried to counteract some of the worst evils of his times by de-feudalising his kingdom as far as possible. He had superseded the hereditary dictatorships of the Deshmukhs in the districts by state officials appointed by himself and holding office during good behaviour. The Peshva too was originally subject to the same condition. No *saranjams* or estates were granted on feudal terms. But from the time of Rajaram, owing to the anarchical conditions, the salutary principles of Shivaji were abandoned with fatal consequences. The Maratha generals, like Shinde, Holkar, Gaikwad, etc., who extended the Maratha dominions, tended to break away from the central allegiance when the Peshva usurped the place of the Chhatrapati. Those who were originally servants of a common master were not inclined to submit to any one of them under the changed circumstances. Even the *sardars* (who were the creatures of the first two Peshvas) soon came to realize their own importance, by virtue of the *de facto* power they wielded, and were not amenable to the central control of the later Peshvas. Even then, it is misleading to speak of the 'Maratha *Confederacy*' comprised by the Peshva Shinde, Holkar and others. For one thing, there was no constitutional basis on which the so-called 'confederacy' rested. It was not so deliberately or formally organized. However loose the structure, the Maratha State was still a unitary monarchy with the Chhatrapati as its sovereign head. The Peshva as well as all other *sardars* owed and owned theoretical allegiance to that central authority in whose name everything was done, even when the Chhatrapati had been reduced to a shadow or mockery. The insignia of the Peshva's

* See Introd. vii-xi Ranade's *Rise of the Maratha Power* (B.U. ed. 1960).

office continued to be received at the hands of the puppet Chhatrapati, upto the last, and even the powerful Mahadji Shinde kept up the show of being the Peshva's humble servant at a formal *darbar*. Members of 'confederacies,' as they are understood in history and politics have acted differently. It was, however, convenient for the enemies of the Marathas to invent this fiction of a 'Maratha Confederacy,' so that they might enter into separate engagements with its members severally to suit their own purpose of *divide et impera*

At the bottom of the Maratha political system was the village community. This has indeed been always the case with the whole of India. The universal prevalence of this element at all times in our country has saved and preserved our civilisation and culture despite the vicissitudes of our political history. 'In whatever point of view we examine the native government in the Deccan,' observed Elphinstone, 'the first and the most important feature is the division into villages and townships. These communities contain, in miniature, all the materials of a State within themselves and are almost sufficient to protect their members, if all other governments were withdrawn.' The Patil was the prop of the village administration. He was assisted by a Kulkarni and a Panchayat who enjoyed the confidence of all the villagers. The Chaugula and the Potdar were the other two servants of the local administration. All important transactions and documents were to be attested by the *Balutas* who were traditionally twelve in number: Kulkarni, Potdar, Joshi, Gurav, Lohar, Kumbhar, Parit, Nhavi, Sutar, Chambhar, Mahar and Mang. Between themselves, from the Patil to the Mang, they represented all the communities living in the village. The Patil was invariably a Maratha and the Kulkarni and Joshi (clerk and astrologer) alone were Brahmans. The Potdar or assayer of coins was usually a Sonar or goldsmith. In the days before Shivaji, the local landlords (Mirasdars), the Deshmukhs and Deshpandes, were the *de facto* rulers of the outlying districts. With the creation of a central administration, they were superseded by government officials like the Kamavisdars and Mamlatdars. While the traditional servants were hereditary, the new officials were appointees of the government subject to transfer or dismissal.

In the towns the Kotwal was an important officer—as under the Mughals. A document of the time of Madhavrao, dated 1767-8, enumerates his duties as follows: (1) to settle important disputes, (2) to fix the prices of commodities, (3) to supply labourers to government, (4) to supervise the sale and purchase of lands and collect the fees of such transactions, (5) to take the census and keep a record of persons entering and leaving the city, (6) to advise government on the amendment of regulations, (7) demarcation of boundaries of lanes, roads and houses, and regulation of gambling.

The Maratha State has been described by Sir Jadunath Sarkar as a *Krieg-staat* by which he implies 'a government that lives and grows only by wars of aggression.' This is a half-truth that requires considerable elucidation to avoid misunderstanding. In the first place, it is necessary to remember that the Maratha State came into existence as the outcome of a war of liberation from the shackles of Mughal and Bijapur domination. In the time of Shivaji, it is difficult to characterise any of his campaigns as 'wars of aggression.' Some of them constituted 'offensive actions' in the military sense—like his raids on Surat. Shivaji justified his expeditions into *Mughlai*, with the collection of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* and other booty, by arguing that the Mughal Emperor's invasion of Maharashtra had forced the Marathas to take up arms in defence of their country and hence there was nothing wrong in maintaining his army at the cost of his enemy. In a sense, this was more logical than Napoleon Bonaparte's feeding of his army on the loot of Italy and other countries whose national soil he violated by his aggressive campaigns. Shivaji's wars against the Mughal Empire, or even Bijapur (in so far as it ruled over Maratha territory), could not be characterised as wars of aggression. But his Karnatak expedition and invasion of the Tamil country were a shade different. Though Shahji and his son Vyankoji had already established Maratha rule in those regions, and Shivaji was only consolidating their acquisitions, it was really a campaign of aggression. The Maratha explanation that they were out to establish Hindpad-shahi all over Hindusthan cannot be sustained. Under the Peshvas, particularly, the Marathas were more and more exposing themselves to the

implied charge of their critics. We may therefore say that 'Krieg-staat' is more applicable to Maratha *Samrajya* than to Maratha *Svarajya*. It is, however, just possible that Shivaji regarded his Karnatak campaign as an inevitable part of his strategy against his enemies. On the whole, a careful study of the civil achievements of the Marathas will serve to modify or qualify their characterisation as having 'grown only by wars of aggression.' Here primarily we are concerned with their military and naval organisation.

No State can exist without a strong and efficient force to defend it. Babur and Akbar founded the Mughal Empire by their military superiority over their enemies. The might of Aurangzeb could not prevail over the Maratha resistance because of certain qualities which the Marathas displayed in their fight against the Imperial and local Muslim powers Those qualities were partly inherrent in the Maratha national character, and partly developed by historical forces. From Malik Ambar to Shivaji, the Marathas had been trained in arms to good purpose, and their native toughness of fibre had been strengthened by the will to be free, in the first instance, in the interests of *Maharashtra Dharma*. Shivaji moulded, from the tame Mavales of his homelands, a mighty military force, and made of the Marathas a power to reckon with, not only in the Deccan but also, ultimately, in India. Its defensive force was transformed into an aggressive avalanche by the military genius of the warlike Peshva Bajirao I.

No other part of India is studded with so many fortresses as Maharashtra. They call them *Killas*, which are of three classes: *gad*, *kot* and *durg*. The first are built on the prominent tops of hills; the second on level country, *desh*; and the last along the sea-shore or on crags and islands near the coast. The *Adnyapatra* gives detailed practical instructions on the construction of forts and declares: 'The chief means for the protection of the kingdom are forts. If there are no forts, during a foreign invasion, the open country becomes supportless and is easily desolated. A country without forts is like a land protected only by the passing clouds.' In times of danger they sheltered the population and normally acted as storehouses of grain, ammunition and

all valuables. They were garrisoned with regular troops officered by a *Havaldar* who was a Maratha, a *Sabnis* who was a Brahman, and a *Karkhanis* who was a Prabhu (Kayastha). Besides these, there were Ramoshis who did the policing of the outskirts or scouting. 'In this manner was the administration of the fort carefully and newly organised,' writes Sabhasad, 'no single individual could surrender the fort to any rebel or miscreant.'

The army was mainly composed of infantry and cavalry, though other auxiliaries like elephants and camels, etc., came to be used in course of time. They were armed with swords, spears, bows, matchlocks, and artillery to a certain extent. The recruitment, in Shivaji's time, was done by him after careful personal inspection. In the beginning, the Maratha army was a national militia; but under the Peshvas, mercenaries of all nationalities (including non-Indians like Pathans, Arabs and Europeans) also came to be enrolled. There were two classes of troops: the regular *bargirs* (equipped and maintained by government) and the *shiledars* or freelancers who brought their own horses and equipment. Both were, however, subject to the same discipline under the *Sarnobat* (*Sar-i-naubat*) or commander-in-chief. This discipline, in the time of Shivaji, was very rigorous and exacting. Cowardice was ruthlessly punished, and no soldier could take a woman during campaigns. The death-penalty was imposed upon those who broke these rules. The campaigning season lasted for eight months in the year, starting with *Dasarah* and ending with the advent of the rains, generally. Shivaji and Bajirao, however, like Napoleon, did not allow military activities to be governed by the seasons.

The unit of the State cavalry (*paga*) was 25 *bargirs* under a *havaldar*. There was a *jumladar* over every 5-*havaldars*, and one *hazari* over 10 *jumladars*. The 5-*hazari* in the cavalry and 7-*hazari* in the infantry were the highest ranks, with the *Sarnobat* above them. A slight variation in the case of the infantry was that the unit of the *paiks* (privates) was 9; over them was a *naik*. Over 5 *naiks* was one *havaldar*, with a *jumladar* over every two *havaldars*, and a *hazari* over every 10 *jumladars*. There were *karkuns*, couriers, spies, water-carriers, farriers, etc., with every unit—all

under the command and discipline of the *Sarnobat*. Everything was minutely planned, and Shivaji's instructions, as recorded by Sabhasad, included caution against mice that might start a conflagration in camp, if the wicks of the oil-lamps were not carefully guarded from them!

All were paid in cash. A *hazari* was paid 1000 *hons* a year and a 5-*hazari* not more than 2000 *hons*. A *jumladar* received 100 to 125 *hons*. The belongings of every trooper were carefully enumerated at the commencement of an expedition and again at the end of it. The difference, comprising the booty, was to be handed over to the State treasury; not a needle or a pie was allowed to be retained by the soldiers. The accounts of military income and disbursements were prepared and submitted over the signatures of four officers: the *hazari*, *mujumdar*, *karbhari* and *jam-navis*.

The morale of the army under Shivaji has been attested by Khafi Khan, already cited. He never allowed a copy of the holy *Qurran*, or the women belonging to the enemy, to be appropriated by anyone, they were returned to the legitimate persons.

Few Indian rulers since the great maritime days when Indians traded with Rome in the West and China in the East—activities that resulted in the Indian colonisation of South-East Asia—cared for the seas. The Mughals maintained a small fleet to carry pilgrims to Mecca, and for merchantile purposes; but they were essentially a continental race. Even for protection from pirates, they were at the mercy of the European adventurers. Realising this weakness, Shivaji tried to build a navy for the Marathas and, considering the shortness of time, achieved remarkable success. 'Just as the King's success on land depends on the strength of his cavalry,' says the *Adnyapatra*, 'so the mastery of the sea belongs to him who possesses a navy.' Then it proceeds to lay down practical rules for the construction of ships and harbours. Their purpose was both commercial and naval. 'Foreign ships without permits should be subjected to inspection', states the same authority; but 'by assuring safety to seafaring merchants at various ports, they should be allowed freedom of intercourse in trade'. There was a Muslim *Darya-sarang* and a Hindu *Mai-naik* in charge of the

fleet. Malwan (Sindhudurg), Vijaydurg (Gheria), Vengurla and Ratnagiri were some of the important Maratha ports. By the acquisition of Bassein from the Portuguese, they got another important base on the west coast. At Kalyan, Bhiwandi, etc., Shivaji had built his earliest ship-building yards. According to Sabhasad, 700 Maratha ships were out at one time on the seas. They traded as far as Mocha in Western Arabia. Under the Peshvas, 'Maratha traders actually settled in Arabian coast towns like Muscat, and their trading vessels visited China' (S. N. Sen). Shivaji's victory over the English in the severely fought action at 'Henri-Kenri' off the island of Bombay in January 1680, was his greatest naval triumph. That reputation was sustained by Kanhoji Angre ('Shivaji of the seas'), until it was undermined by the Peshvas in combination with the English.

It is not easy to give a satisfactory account of the Revenue and Judicial administraion, covering so vast a period as that from Shivaji to the last Peshva, within a short compass. We can do not more than indicate here some of its main features. As in most other aspects, we must remember the distinction between the *Svarajya* and *Samrajya* territories. So far as the central government was concerned, the only share of the resources it got from the outlying territories was by way of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*. The former constituted 1/4 of the total revenue and the latter an additional 1/10, 25 per cent. of the *chauth* and the whole of the *sardeshmukhi* went into the King's Treasury; the rest was absorbed, in Balaji Vishyanath's system, by the various officers: 6 per cent. *sahotra* to the Pant Sachiv, 3 per cent. *nadgauda* to different persons according to the wishes of the King, and the remainder to the *mokasa* holders or *jagirdars* for maintaining troops in the *chauthai* tracts. In return, the taxed areas were supposed to get protection from the Maratha rulers. Hence this arrangement has been likened to the 'subsidiary system' of Wellesley by some writers. Others have vehemently denied that the *chauth*-collecting Marathas afforded any protection at all.† It may be noted, however, that one of the *sanads* grant-

† See Introd. xii-xiii, Ranade, *op. cit.* "The British gave effective protection which the Marathas did not."

ed to Shahu by the Mughal Emperor legally entitled the Marathas to these levies from the six Mughal *subhas* of the Deccan, in return for a force of 15,000 Maratha troops needed for the protection of those provinces. These rights were further recognised from time to time by the Emperor in respect of other northern provinces occupied by the Maratha generals. The Nizam too was obliged to recognise these levies, right from the time of Asaf Jah. Thus from what might have been originally blackmail, *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* came to be legitimate sources of revenue for the Maratha State.

In *Svarajya*, and wherever the Marathas established regular settled government, the chief sources of revenue were: (1) land-revenue, (2) customs duties, (3) taxes on professions, (4) monopolies, (5) mints, (6) judicial fines, (7) miscellaneous cesses, etc. Of these we shall examine land-revenue as the most important.

Before Shivaji established his benevolent administration, the cultivators were at the mercy of the Deshmukhs and Deshpandes. The revenue collection was arbitrary and tyrannical. Shivaji replaced that feudal oppression by organising a system of just and scientific assessment, following on the lines of Todar Mall and Malik Ambar. The lands were regularly surveyed and classified according to their quality and yield. 'The area of each village was thus ascertained in detail,' writes Sabhasad, 'an estimate was made of the expected produce of each *bigha* three parts of which were left to the peasant, and two parts taken by the State.... New ryots who came to settle were given money for seeds and cattle, the amount being recovered in two or four annual instalments.' Over *mahals* yielding a revenue of 75,000—125,000 *hons*, a *subahdar* and a *mujumdar* were appointed. The former was paid 400 *hons* per year, and the latter 100-125 *hons*. Starting with the hereditary village Patil and Kulkarni and the official Karkuns and Kamavisdars, there was an army of servants reaching up to the central Secretariat. Luckily for the modern student of history, there are thousands of original papers and documents preserved in the Peshva Daftar (at Poona) which throw ample light on the working of the public administration of the Marathas in the various

departments. For the general reader, a few glimpses are afforded by Dr. S. N. Sen in his *Administrative System of the Marathas.*

The process of revenue collection is thus described by Dr. Sen:

> When the time for collection came, the Mahar called the rate-payers to the village *Chawdi* where the Patil held his office. The Kulkarni or the village account-keeper was present there with his records to assist the Patil in his work, and so were Potdars. The latter assayed and stamped the money when paid, for which the rent-payer got a receipt from the Kulkarni. When the collection was over, the money was sent to the Kamavisdar with a letter under the charge of the Chaugula, and a similar letter, often a duplicate copy, was sent to the Deshmukh, under the charge of the Mahar. The Chaugula got a receipt from the Mamlatdar for the sum paid, which was carefully preserved in the Kulkarni's bundle of village accounts. Sometimes a *Shibandi* was sent by the officer in charge of the district or *Tarf* to help the Patil in his work of collection. The revenue was generally paid in four instalments and sometimes in three.

The main principles on which the revenue system was organised were: increase of agricultural wealth and an eye to the welfare of the cultivators. Lands were classified as superior, ordinary, or inferior. Those watered from canals were distinguished from those watered from wells, as also garden lands from the fields producing agricultural crops. Special encouragement was afforded to those bringing waste-lands under cultivation, by the grant of *Tagai* loans and concession in the payment of taxes. Mortgage of lands was prohibited. Animals purchased for agricultural purposes were exempted from *octroi* for five years. Slack or rapacious officers, who either neglected to encourage cultivation or collected more than government dues, were punished. Irrigation works were either undertaken by Government or subsidised. 'Whenever the country needed such relief, leases varying from three to seven years were granted on the terms of *Istwas*, i.e., gradually increasing assessments' (Ranade).

The results of such a policy are reflected in a casual way by Captain William Gordon, who wrote in 1739: 'Rajirao has a great extent of country, to appearance more fertile and valuable than any other I had passed through...His territories are well peopled, and the poorer sort, in the farming way, are rendered easy in their rents, which causes his extent of dominion to be in a very flourishing condition'. When the English conquered the Peshva's territories, they found their system to be good enough to be substantially continued. According to Lt.-Col. Blacker, the Peshva's 'clear Revenue was two crores and 10 lacs of rupees annually'.

Mr. Justice Ranade has observed that, whatever other lapses the later Peshvas may have been guilty of, 'it must in justice to them be admitted that, in the matter of the revenue and judicial management, the Government at Poona showed great powers of application, careful elaboration of detail, and an honest desire to administer well the charge entrusted to them.' This is fully borne out by a detailed examination of specific cases on record. Hundreds of *Mahzars* and *Nivada-patras* or decisions by the *Diwan* (composed of local officials), *Gota* (formed mostly by the local *Vatandars*), and the Peshvas are available. The traditions of Shivaji were revived particularly with the appointment of Rama Shastri as *Nyayadhish* in the time of Madhavrao I. There was a Chief Court of appeal established in Poona, with subordinate courts in other places. There were *Huzur Panchayats*, as well as *Brahma-Sabhas* and *Jati-Sabhas*. 'The general arrangement appears to have been that the Kamavisdar, besides his revenue duties, had both civil and criminal powers attached to his office.' There was no place for lawyers. Arbitrators were chosen from the neighbourhood after the parties to a dispute had stated their respective cases, corroborated by witnesses, oaths and solemn asseverations. The decision of the Kamavisdars only gave effect to the verdict of the arbitrators.

Barring a few exceptions in extreme cases, where mutilations and trial by ordeal were ordered, punishments were generally mild and humane. In the time of Shahu, in criminal cases, 'the only punishments judicially administered were penal servitude, imprisonment in the forts, confiscation

of property, fine, and in a few cases, banishment beyond the frontiers.' The following table will illustrate the truth of this observation:

Ruler	Crime	Acquittals	Punishments
SHAHU	Murders 8	5	Fine and imprisonment 3
BALAJI BAJIRAO	20	3	Heavy fine 8: confiscation* of property 9.
MADHAVRAO I	7	Nil	Fine 3; confiscation of Vatan 3 confinement in fort 1*.
NANA FADNAVIS	2 +	Nil	Death 2, imprisonment, fine and confiscation for the rest. ;

In keeping with the traditions of the country, the Peshvas went out on tours of investigation, heard complaints, and awarded punishments. Broughton was struck with the ease with which Daulatrao Shinde could be approached, even while he was out on an expeditipn, by the seekers of justice. The great Rama Shastri heard complaints and witnesses even at home, but his integrity was never impugned. Such informality has led some critics to doubt the standards of justice administered. Of course there were no such guarantees as are obtaining at present. Political prisoners were often treated with great cruelty and injustice because they were rivals in power. Nana Fadnavis' treatment of the supporters of Raghoba is a case in point.

In this brief history it is not possible to find much space for a detailed study of the social conditions; but a few illustrative facts may be noticed. Maratha society was less conservative and more progressive than is generally believed; at any rate this is true of their government. Superstitions did prevail and persist. Hence there was recourse to trial by ordeal; *shanti* rites, involving the feeding of hundreds of Brahmans, were performed to avert calamities like earthquakes, epidemics and lightning strokes; and official measures were taken to exorcize witchcraft. Sections of the society were also caste-ridden and intolerant in the matter of breaches of tradition and convention. It therefore implies

* In cases of confiscation, compensation was given to the heirs. The murderer confined in a fort was a Brahmen. High treason was punished with being trampled by elephants.

great courage on the part of Government to have tried to regulate social life, against the grain of the majority. But this is just the duty of all progressive governments. The personal lives of the Peshvas were not without serious blemishes; they might have succeeded better if they had begun reform with themselves.

The Marathas are a practical people, and their history bears witness to this traditional characteristic. In an earlier chapter we outlined the *Bhakti* movement which was the spiritual forerunner of the political rise of the Marathas. One of its outstanding features was the revolt against religious conservatism. It broke caste-conventions and revealed progressive trends, right from the beginning. The lives of Dnaneshvar and Eknath bear witness to this. In the time of Shivaji, persons forcibly converted to Islam were readmitted into their original caste after ceremonial purification. Shivaji's own deferred *upanayana* could be performed at his *rajyabhisheka*, when he was already married more than once and a father! Netaji Palkar's is a well known example of reconversion. The Peshvas, being Brahmans, might have been expected to be more orthodox; yet they revealed surprising inclinations to reform. Bajirao did not succeed in absorbing Mastani into his family; but that he conceived of such a step indicated his adventurous nature. There are other instances of a varied character to illustrate how the rigidity of caste regulations and taboos was relaxed wherever found necessary.

The most striking characteristic of the religious policy was its toleration of all faiths. We have remarked before that, although the Marathas waged constant war against the Muhammadan powers, theirs was essentially a political rather than a religious struggle. Neither Shivaji nor the Peshvas placed any disabilities on the Muslims, and both employed them in their service, military as well as civil. Likewise, they extended patronage to their religious men and participated in their festivities. Shivaji tried to maintain social balance by the proper distribution of the services among all castes, each according to its inherited aptitude. Careers were really open to talent under him. But, in course of time, the Peshvas developed a bias for Brahmans. There were at one

stage restrictions on the Prabhus in the matter of *upanayana* and the use by them of Vedic mantras, though these were later removed on appeal. Prabhus were classed with the *shudras* and ordered to permit remarriage of widows in willing cases. On the other hand, there is on record an instance of a woman forcibly violated by a Muslim; she was readmitted to all her previous caste privileges after undergoing expiatory rites. Another, whose husband had deserted her, was permitted to marry again when she represented her case to the Peshva. There are also instances of the exaction of dowry being prohibited. Bajirao II, curiously enough, made the marriage of girls above nine years of age obligatory on the parents, under threat of punishment for defaulters! Government servants were prohibited from indulgence in intoxicating drinks. Cow-slaughter was a crime. It may be recalled that Mahadji Shinde obtained from the Mughal Emperor a *firman* prohibiting this practice in the Imperial dominions as well.

Another enlightened practice of the Peshvas was the patronage they extended to men of learning. At first it was discriminating, though in course of time all Brahmans came to be recipients of the *dakshina*. Under Nana Fadnavis, these disbursements amounted of Rs. 60,000 annually. 'Liberal concessions were made for enlarging the limits of the more prosperous towns by grant of lands, exemptions, and Vatans to those who undertook to bring foreign settlers and induced them to build new houses and open new Bazaars.' Learned men from all parts of India were similarly attracted to Poona and Bajirao II spent some four *lakhs* of rupees among them in charity. That munificence brought to Poona a reputation as a centre of learning which has survived to our own time.

Barring exceptional misdemeanours, like that of Ghashiram Kotwal in the time of Nana Fadnavis, the policing of the Peshvas' territories was quite good. Elphinstone remarked: 'Murder or robberies attended with violence and alarm were very rare; and I have never heard any complaints of the insecurity of property.' Tone, speaking of Poona, likewise observed: 'It is little remarkable for anything but its excellent Police which alone employs a thousand men. After the firing of the gun, which takes place at ten in the night, no

person can appear in the streets without being taken up by the Patroles, and detained prisoner until dismissed in the morning by the Kotwal. So strict is the discipline observed that the Peshva himself had been kept prisoner a whole night for being out at improper hours.' Lt. Edward Moor, who visited Poona in 1792, confirmed that the police were 'uncommonly well regulated.'

The above account might seem too idyllic if it were not qualified with a few remarks on the variations. There was deterioration in certain respects, even as there was improvement in others under the various rulers from Shivaji to Bajirao II. Before the rise of Shivaji, as Sarkar has observed, 'the Maratha race was scattered like atoms through many Deccani kingdoms. He welded them into a mighty nation. And he achieved this in the teeth of the opposition of four great Powers like the Mughal Empire, Bijapur, Portuguese India, and the Abyssinians of Janjira. No other medieval Hindu had shown such capacity....Then he founded a State and taught his people that they were capable of administering a kingdom in all its departments,' 'It was the training gained in Shivaji's service, aided by the Maratha national character for personal independence and initiative, that enabled the disorganised Maratha people to stand up against all the resources of the mighty Aurangzeb for eighteen years after the murder of Sambhaji and ultimately to defeat him, even though they had no king or capital to form the centre of the national defence.' That is why the *Adnyapatra* cryptically declares: 'He created a wholly New Order of things.' To symbolise this, Shivaji assumed the unique title of *Chhatrapati*. It literally meant 'Lord of the Umbrella'. Unlike the truculent royal crests like the lion or the eagle, this was a benign and protective symbol, quite in keeping with the traditional Hindu ideal of monarchy.

Sambhaji was brave to a fault; he was reckless. The nine years of his reign (1680-89) were a long-drawn agony for his people. Rajaram was obliged to go into exile at Ginji, and the Maratha country was flooded with Mughal troops. Hence it became a vast battlefield under the dictatorship of the *Hukmatpanah*. With the death of Rajaram in 1700, Maharashtra virtually became kingless, though not leaderless.

The redoubtable Tarabai (widow of Rajaram) fought like Boadecea on behalf of her infant prince Shivaji. Khwafi Khan has vividly described how stiff was the struggle against a nation in arms, the 'organised anarchy' of the Marathas. The death of Aurangzeb in 1707 was followed by the release of Shahu (son of Sambhaji), and his coronation as Chhatrapati the next year. Tarabai, no doubt, created a rival enclave in Kolhapur on behalf of her *faineant chhatrapatis*, but Shahu's sovereignty was acknowledged over the rest of the Maratha dominions until his death in 1749. Even Sambhaji II of Kolhapur, after the Treaty of Warna (1731), accepted Shahu's suzerainty. Thus the unity of the whole of Maharashtra was achieved under the statesmanlike regime of Shahu, the last of the great Chhatrapatis. He wielded an influence which was almost like power, as that of Queen Victoria in England in the latter half of last century, though the Peshvas were, in the meanwhile, steadily building up their dominating authority. The Chhatrapatis who followed were pitiable puppets of the Peshvas'.

The Peshvas post was not hereditary, as we noted before, in the time of Shivaji. When Rajaram created the new office of Pratinidhi during the Ginji exile, that dignitary was paid a salary higher than the Peshva. Neverthless, with the appointment of Balaji Vishvanath Bhat as Peshva under Shahu, a new chapter was opened, not only in the order of precedence in the Maratha ministry, but also in the character and history of the entire Maratha State. Thenceforward the office of Peshva became hereditary in the house of Balaji. The other ministers of the Raj Mandal, with the exception of the Fadnavis and the Mujumdar, dropped out one by one. Continuing to receive the insignia of office at the hands of the titular Chhatrapati, the Peshvas became *de facto* masters over all. After the death of Shahu they transferred the seat of government from Satara to Poona. The Chhatrapati at Satara was assigned a pension of Rs. 30,000 a year. To this pittance minor additions were later made by the magnanimity of Madhavrao and Nana Fadnavis. The title of *Vakil-i-mutluq* was nonetheless accepted by the Peshva with the 'permission' of the Chhatrapati at Satara. But the same fate overtook the last of the Peshvas when Nana Fadnavis became

the Peshva's maker and *de facto* master. Bajirao II ended his days as a pensioner of the British.

It is clear from the above account that, just as the Chhatrapatis were not all alike in their character, capacities or fortunes, so were the Peshvas different from one another in these respects. The first of them, Balaji Vishvanath, though less is known about him than about the rest, appears to have been a man of administrative, diplomatic, and military capacity. He reorganised the finances as well as the army, and acquired from Shahu the title of 'Sena-Karta'. He also obtained from the Mughal Emperor the important *sanads* of *chauth* and *sardesmukhi* in the six Imperial *subahs* of the Deccan. This was the corridor through which the Marathas pushed into northern India. The second Peshva, Bajirao I, was a brilliant soldier, and carved out an Empire for his race in Hindusthan. But his financial capacity was zero. In spite of all the plunder he gathered in his expeditions, he died heavily indebted. The public debt during the period 1740-60 is estimated by Ranade at a *crore* and a half. 'The strain represented by this amount,' he writes, 'will be better understood when it is mentioned that the Peshva's Government had to pay from 12 to 18 per cent. interest on these loans.' Much of that debt was due to Bajirao's extravagant military expenditure and that of his son Raghoba. Both of them earned for the Marathas a military reputation which proved fatal to the State in more senses than one.

The tribute paid by Grant Duff to Balaji Bajirao, the next Peshva, was well merited. We make no excuse for reproducing it in full:

> Balaji Bajirao was one of those princes whose good fortune originating in causes anterior to their time, obtained in consequence of national prosperity, a higher degree of celebrity than they may fully merit. He was a man of considerable political sagacity, of polished manners and of great address. The territory under the care of the Peshva had been in a progressive state of improvement. Balaji Bajirao appointed fixed Mamlatdars or Subahdars each of whom had charge of several districts. They held absolute charge of the police, the revenue and the civil

> and criminal judicature, and in most cases had power of life and death. The commencement of a better system of administration, particularly for Maharashtra, is ascribed to Ramchandra Baba Shenwee, and after his death Sadashivrao improved on his suggestions. A Shastree of respectability named Balkrishna Gadgil was appointed head of the Poona-Nyayadhishi or court of justice, and the police was much invigorated at the capital. Under the government of Balajirao, Panchayats, the ordinary tribunals of civil justice, began to improve. The Maratha dominion attained its greatest extent under Balajirao's administration, and most of the principal Brahman families can only date their rise from that period. In short, the condition of the whole population was in his time improved and the Maratha peasantry, sensible of the comparative amelioration which they began to enjoy, have ever since blessed the days of Nana Saheb Peshva.

Similar encomiums have been showered upon the more gifted though shortlived Peshva Madhavrao I. Judged by all standards, he was undoubtedly the greatest of the entire dynasty: as administrator and statesman certainly, and not less as a soldier. In diplomacy he surpassed all his predecessors. His minute attention to every detail of the day-to-day administration, his firmness in uprooting corruption, his keen anxiety to render impartial justice to all classes of his subjects with the assistance of the great Ram Shastri, and his assiduous care of the peasantry, met with grateful appreciation by his contemporaries and admiration by historians ever since. In the words of Sardesai, 'The very name of this Peshva came to be held in awe by the rulers and the ruled in and out of the Maratha State...Quite a new generation of honest and efficient officials, clerks, accountants, supervisors, revenue collectors, military suppliers, came to be reared up.' Sir Richard Temple conveys much the same impression when he says: 'His care extended to the fiscal, the judicial, and the general departments. All men in his day knew that the head of the State was personally master of the work, was the friend of the oppressed and the foe of the oppressor, and was choosing agents who would carry out

his beneficent orders. His thoughtfulness and considerateness were untiring and were often shown in a signal or graceful manner.' Our admiration increases when we remember that Madhavrao was but twenty-eight years of age when he died. Yet it is sad to learn that he too had a heavy load of debt to carry, amounting to some Rs. 24,00,000.

Nana Fadnavis who, perhaps, had no equal in the management of finance, still left no surplus balance in the Treasury. He was reputed to have concealed his enormous riches somewhere beyond the ken of his contemporaries, but the State could not satisfy its needs on this Barmicide Feast! Ranade writes: 'The last Peshva had apparently no debts to pay, but was able to collect a large private treasure of his own.' Nevertheless the State foundered on account of him. Indeed as Palmer observed, with Nana Fadnavis, despite his faults, had departed 'all the wisdom and moderation of the Maratha Government'.

It is tempting and easy to be severe in passing facile verdicts on people who have failed in history. The Marathas have had more than their legitimate share of criticism, for their real or imaginary blemishes and blunders, at the hands of historians with the peculiar advantage of being wise after the event. We shall not recount here all that has been said or written about them either from prejudice or from ignorance. The character of the political adventures of the Marathas has been described above. Their cultural contributions will be assessed in the next chapter. The broad fact remains that they failed to sustain their political supremacy or hold over the greater part of India. An analysis of the causes of that failure is an essential part of our historical study. Modern India cannot afford to repeat the blunders committed by them.

We may dispose of the general causes before we examine the more specific ones. In the first place, monarchy and hereditary dynastic rule, like that of the Chhatrapatis and the Peshvas, was by its very nature and inherent defects not calculated to endure intact. The fate of the Imperial Mughals was, therefore, not to be missed by the Imperial Marathas. It is true that the times were not ripe for the creation of a non-heraditary head of the State; but it was a

fatal blunder that led the Marathas to deviate from the wise policy of Shivaji who did not observe the principle of hereditary succession in the appointment of his officers. Secondly, as we have poited out more than once, Shivaji had tried to defeudalise the State he was building to a considerable extent. From the time of Rajaram there was a revival of the *Sarajam* system out of which were to grow the several Maratha sub-states each pulling apart from the central authority and national interests. Thirdly, the very growth of the Maratha *Svarayja* into *Samrajya* involved a transformation that proved fatal to its continuation. As Mr. V. V. Joshi has rightly observed: 'A people in order to establish a new civilisation must preach a new order. Their social, political, economic and spiritual life must have as its ideal and basis something new and progressive; something which they can give to others. The new order gives a moral and organisational superiority to a people and they prevail in a struggle against others, who have no philosophy and no ideals.' Shivaji's *Svarajya* possessed all these qualities; that is why it succeeded. The Peshvas' *Samrajya* lacked all of them; hence its ultimate failure. The Maratha movement in the 'royal period' was natural, national and dynamic; under the Peshvas it was artificial, unnatural, and static, i.e., uncreative, unconstructive and unnational. Shivaji mobilised the Marathas for the attainment of national independence and the protection and preservation of *Maharashtra Dharma*. The Peshvas aimed at Maratha aggrandisement at the expense of others like the Gujaratis, the Rajputs and the Jats, with the help of miscellaneous mercenaries including Pathans, Pindaris and Europeans. While Shivaji's efforts were concentrated on the building up of a positive Maratha Polity, the Peshvas were lured by ephemeral glory and power and the stream of gold flowing into Poona from the North and the South. Neither in ideas nor in the means with which they sought to realise them was there any originality among the Peshvas. Just as the decadent Mughal Empire was overthrown by the living force of the Marathas under Shivaji's creative leadership during the seventeenth century, the decadent Maratha Empire was disintegrated by the positive force for which the English stood from the close of the eighteenth century onwards.

Among the specific causes leading to the ultimate failure of the Marathas we can touch upon only the most salient ones. The greatest blunder committed by them was their northern adventure. To 'strike at the trunk of the decaying tree' was no doubt a temptation, but the Marathas were ill-equipped for it. Bajirao had the dash of a soldier, but neither the patience of an administrator nor the vision of a statesman. Sripatrao Pratihidhi's failure, in the historic debate over the question of 'consolidation *vs.* expansion' showed how rhetoric could triumph over reason, and political wisdom be worsted by vanity. It is puerile to suggest that, since the South was left to the junior branch of Kolhapur to exploit, there was nothing else for Shahu to do but to expand northwards. To close up the divisions at home was more essential than to strike for an Empire outside. To declare that the northern campaigns were intended to divert the turbulent elements within Maharashtra is to justify the criticism that the Maratha State was a predatory organisation of bandits. There were enemies nearer home like the Nizam, the Siddis and the Europeans, that needed to be eliminated, but were foolishly suffered not only to remain but also to grow strong. The Panipat disaster and Raghoba's desertion to the English, together with its corollary, Bajirao's Treaty of Bassein, were the obverse and the reverse of the same coin. The ultimate survival of islands of Maratha power in Baroda, Gwalior, and Indore, is hardly sufficient compensation for the retribution reaped at home: the wiping out of Poona and Satara. The betrayal of the national interests, by having recourse to the English, was not confined to Raghoba and his son Bajirao II; the Peshvas had already pointed the way by taking their assistance against the Angres.

The northern adventures might have been justified, if the conquerors had the desire and the capacity to organise their conquests on the lines of Shivaji's *Svarajya*. Akbar had launched upon a career of wide territorial expansion but he vindicated his Imperialism by his equally great benevolence towards his subjects in all parts of his Empire. He created and left a rich and growing legacy to his successors. Napoleon at least enriched France by the loot he gathered from the rest of Europe. The Peshvas, for all their martial explo-

its, impoverished themselves and their victims. Financial bankruptcy was the ever-present skeleton in the Imperial cupboard which the Peshvas had not the capacity to exorcise.

All Empire-builders have used the army as an instrument of State policy. Shivaji created a splendid military force and carved out a kingdom which became the foundation of Maratha pride and power. But his was a national militia with a splendid morale. The ambitions of the Peshvas led them into situations that blinded them to the secrets of Shivaji's success. As Mr. V. V. Joshi has forcibly put it, 'just as Bajirao symbolised the denationalisation of the Maratha State, Mahadji symbolised denationalisation of the Maratha army.' This need not necessarily have proved disastrous. The British built their Empire with the use of heterogeneous mercenaries. But where the Marathas failed was in their inability 'to steal the thunder of their enemies.' They continued to borrow artillery as well as artillery-experts from foreigners upto the last. They had not the qualities displayed by the Japanese later. We may broaden this criticism and apply it to all Indians. We have been too slow to profit from example and experience. The Marathas produced several generals who were experts in guerilla warfare, but not any worthy to be compared with the European generals they had to fight against. They were for ever at the mercy of de Boignes and Perrons. They never turned to the mastery of modern scientific warfare. On the contrary, they lapsed even from the sound principles of Shivaji. Not only did they abandon his guerilla tactics, for which the Marathas had a genius, but also relinquished his high moral principles. To take women during campaigns was a military crime punishable with death in the time of Shivaji. Under the Peshvas, it was a recognised fashion. The later Marathas could no more resist the weaknesses that flesh is heir to than the later Mughals; hence they went the way of all flesh equally with their prototypes.

Longevity is not all a boon from heaven: it is at least partly an index of physical stamina. The later Marathas led fast lives in every sense of the term. But whatever the cause, the brevity of the lives of their most prominent leaders was fatal to the cause they represented. All but the first and the last of the Peshvas met with a premature death. Hence the

dictum of Grant Duff about Madhavrao I is applicable to the entire dynasty: 'their untimely demise was more fatal to the Maratha Empire than the holocaust of Panipat.' Another aspect of the misfortune of the Marathas was the series of deaths of important personalities that the last eleven years of the eighteenth century witnessed. The great judge Rama Shastri died in 1789; Mahadji Shinde and Haripant Phadke in 1794; Ahilyabai Holkar and Peshva Madhavrao II in 1795; Tukoji Holkar in 1797; Parashuram Bhau Patwardhan in 1799 and lastly Nana Fadnavis in 1800. When these tall poppies were mown down by the hand of fate, only ignominious betrayers of Maratha independence like Bajirao II, Anandarao Gaikwad, Daulatrao Shinde, Yashvantrao Holkar, and Raghuji Bhonsale remained.

That lack of unity is the cause of political surrender is a truism oft repeated by historians who write the epitaph on fallen nations. The details of how Maratha independence was surrendered to the British have been dealt with in the narration already. In the present analysis we may refer to only one of the aspects of disunity on which some modern reformist writers have harped. Both Ranade and Sarkar have laid considerable emphasis on caste as having largely contributed to the disintegration of the Maratha power. This is one of the most misunderstood and misused terms in the vocabulary of the critics of things Indian. Caste certainly has much to answer for in the decline of Indian civilisation. In modern India few would mourn its total abolition. But to attribute the decline and fall of the Maratha Empire to caste antagonisms is, to put it mildly, unhistorical. Sardesai has subjected this criticism to a searching scrutiny, and after examining the fortunes and careers of over 100 families in the course of 150 years of Maratha history, has come to the conclusion that caste did not play, so far as the administration was concerned, any significant part. It is admitted by all that, under Shivaji, careers were open to talent absolutely. If the criticism has any point at all, it is supposed to apply to the rule of the Peshvas. It is well known that the Maratha (non-Brahman) generals who rose to eminence and became founders of principalities in the North, did so by the patronage of the first two Peshvas. Balaji Bajirao, the

third Peshva, in a letter addressed to Shahu (quoted by Sardesai, in his *Main Currents*, p. 180) states: 'We, as Your Highness' ministers, know only this, that all castes, whether Deshasthas, Kokanasthas, Karhadas, Prabhus, Shenvis or Marathas, all belong equally to Your Highness as their father. Their service alone should be the measure of their worth, and not their caste.' Madhavrao and his famous chief justice Rama Shastri were well known for their impartiality towards all classes of people. 'It is worth noting,' Sardesai points out, 'that out of the 49 persons found guilty of the murder of Narayanrao (Peshva), 24 were Deccani Brahmans of the murdered Peshva's caste, 2 Saraswats, 3 Prabhus, 6 Marathas, 1 Maratha maid-servant, 5 Mussalmans and 8 North Indian Hindus.' Even Ranade, who has so much inveighed against caste, admits: 'As between caste and caste, the Peshvas held the balance evenly, even when the interests of Brahmin priests were affected.' He has cited several concrete instances in support of this observation (*Miscellaneous Writings*, pp. 378-9). In all their major engagements in victory and in defeat, as at Kharda and Panipat, the Brahmans and the Marathas fought shoulder to shoulder and shed their blood in the interests of the Maratha power. When the period of intestinal feuds, rivalries and intrigues started, the commission of suicidal follies was not confined to any single caste. They were committed as often within the same caste as between castes. The demoralisation pervaded all sections. If modern social reformers want to point a moral at all, they should seek other illustrations. Nevertheless, as the English observed: 'It has always been allowed, and that too with just reason, that nothing can reduce the Maratha power but dissensions among themselves, and it is fortunate for the other Powers in Hindusthan that the Maratha Chiefs are always ready to take every advantage of each other.' The British profited most by these dissensions.

NOTE: MINTS AND CURRENCIES

In the text we have often referred to the *hon e.g.* in giving the salaries of the various officers in the Maratha army. This was a gold coin 3½ *masas* in weight, 1 *masa* = 1/12 *tola*. Each *hon* contained 2¾ *masas* and ¼ *gunja* of gold, and 5½

gunjas of silver; 1 *masa* = 8 *gunjas*. Delhi gold and silver were regarded as the standard of purity. Besides the *hon*, there was another gold coin in circulation, viz., *mohur*. The Delhi (Aurangzeb) *mohur* = 14½ rupees and the Surti *mohur* = 15½ rupees. The Maratha *mohur* approximated to these. The silver rupee = the English coin of the same denomination at Madras. The lowest coin was the copper pice (*paisa*) = 10 *masas* = 10/12 *tola* of copper. There was a *dhabu* = 2 pice = 22 *masas*. Cowries were used to denote fractions of a pice. The most widely circulated pice was the *Shivarayi* which was introduced by Shivaji.

Mints were not the monopoly of the State. Coins were produced by the *sonars* or *savkars* (goldsmiths and bankers). They were consequently minted at several places and generally bore the marks of the producer and the place of origin. Some of them bore the seal of Shivaji, or that of Shahu, or of the Peshva, or of the local ruler (like Gaikwad, Holkar or Shinde). Maratha coins, like those of the early East India Company, down to 1835, often carried the legend of the Mughal Emperor in Persian. All these coins were simultaneously in circulation, each finding its own level by the judgment of the dealers. About 1744 Balaji Bajirao tried to reorganise the mints and currencies by granting licenses to some persons with defined regulations and specifications. Revenue came to be assessed and collected in terms of the standard *hon*, and salaries were also paid similarly. When the British inherited the legacy of the Peshvas, there were no fewer than 38 varieties of gold coin and 127 of silver in circulation in the Bombay Province alone.

The variety and the lack of standardisation were due to the laxity of government on the one side, and the difficulties of communications on the other. Territories, too, frequently changed masters. Ranade concludes his survey of 'Currencies and Mints under Maratha Rule' with the remark: '...the statement now generally made that India was too poor a country for the circulation of gold coin is unsupported by the facts of the case, as they can be ascertained from the history of the Mints under Maratha rule.'

CHAPTER XVII

MARATHA CONTRIBUTIONS

MODERN INDIA is an edifice that has been built by many hands. There was something rugged, pragmatic and calculating in the Maratha national character that left little room for the nicer graces of life. They had more of the Spartan than of the Athenian elements in their composition. Much is written of the grand palace supposed to have been erected by Bajirao in the Shanvarvada at Poona. But today, thanks to the vandalism of their enemies, only the plinth and the outer shell of the surrounding fortification have remained. The only surviving specimens of the Peshvai architecture in Poona are the temples of Parvati and the porch of the Vishram Bag palace, which later housed the municipal offices. In the provincial capitals like Kolhapur, Baroda, Indore and Gwalior, of course, there is better, and even impressive evidence of the sense of art, but it cannot be claimed that all this is the distinctive creation of the Marathas. Apart from the Hemadpanthi style of temple-building, coming down from the thirteenth century, the Marathas produced nothing of note in the monumental art. Though Ajanta, Ellora, Karla, and Elephanta are within the Maratha territory, they are the creations of a civilisation totally different from the spirit and outlook of the makers of Maratha *Svarajya* and *Samrajya*, with which we are more directly concerned here. There is, however, enough to appreciate in the world of Marathi literature to compensate for other lacks.

Marathi literature was originally inspired by religion and adopted poetry as its most natural medium. We shall not dwell on its history here except in its bearing on the birth of modern Maharashtra which is still very much alive. The distinctive literary modes created by the Marathi writers were the *ovi* and *abhanga*. These facile meters, marked with rhymes, are capable of versatile treatment. The former is particularly suited for long compositions, and the latter for shorter religious lyrics and aphorisms. The vogue

started with Dnaneshvar and Namdev, at the close of the thirteenth century and continued down through Eknath, to Tukaram and Ramdas in the time of Shivaji. Other writers like Vaman and Moropant, in the eighteenth century, adopted other forms, particularly the *sloka* and *arya*, but the *motif* was still religious. It was only as the century advanced, and religion yielded place to secular interests, that poets like Raghunath Pundit turned to subjects like *Svayamvara* (the marriage of Nala and Damayanti). An *arya* declares:

The best *sloka* is Vaman's, the best *abhanga* Tukaram's,
The best *ovi* Mukteshvar's and the best *arya* Moropant's.

Dnaneshvar wrote under the patronage of the Yadava rulers of Devgiri (Daulatabad), and Raghunath Pundit at Tanjore, the southernmost limit of Maratha power and influence. The *Dnaneshvari*, comprising over 9,000 *ovis*, is a commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*, composed in the 13th century Marathi dialect (Prakrit), but still holds its sway on the mind of Maharashtra as well as outside. It has been translated into English and other languages. But the universal masters of the hearts of the common men and women even today, wherever Marathi is spoken or understood, are Namdev and Tukaram. A few verses composed by the former have been assimilated into the *Granth Saheb* of the Sikhs. Of Tukaram's *gathas* or *abhangas*, Rev. MacNicol has remarked: 'The popularity of his verses has continued undiminished until today: and they are so widely known among all classes of Marathas that many of them have almost come to have the vogue and authority of proverbs. They are more familiar throughout Maharashtra than are (or were) in Scotland 'the psalms of David or the songs of Burns.' The voice of the centuries is still heard in the streets, lanes and cottages of Maharashtra. Not only the *Varkari* (pilgrim) on his way to Pandharpur, the spiritual capital of Maharashtra, but the ordinary labourers and cart-men on their daily round may be still heard humming the verses of Tukaram.* In like manner, little children are taught to learn by rote the '*Manache sloka*' (self-advice to the mind) of Ramdas (*guru* of Shivaji),

* See the author's *Focus on Tukaram from a Fresh Angle* for the Saints' real greatness.

even as the adults imbibe the practical wisdom contained in his '*Dasa Bodha.*'

Among the works of the eighteenth century still read, re-read, and appreciated, are the compositions of Shridhar, *Rama-vijaya* (Triumph of Rama), *Hari-vijaya* (Triumph of Hari), *Pandava-Pratapa* (Prowess of the Pandavas), and *Shivaleelamrita* (Nectar of Shiva's Sport), and as Acworth has aptly put it: '"There is no Maratha poet who equals Shridhar in the acceptance he obtains from all clesses. The Brahman may prefer Moropant, the Kunbi Tukaram, but each will put Shridhar next to him, and each will prefer Shridhar to the poet preferred by the other.' Moropant dominated the eighteenth century by the spell of his poetry and as the culmination of the Pundit tradition. His *Kekavali* (Peacock's Cry) was perhaps the only poem written by him with an eye to art essentially. Of the earlier writers in the *ovi* style, Eknath's commentary on the *Bhagavata* is still an unsurpassed classic; while Mahipati's *Bhakti-vijaya* (Triumph of Bhakti) enjoys a unique popularity among the simpler folk.

Just as the Bhakti movement democratised religion in Maharashtra and leavened the whole society with universal devotion, as a precursor of the political upheaval, the composers of the *Povadas* or ballads, filled men and women, young and old, with a fervour for brave deeds and sacrifice for the national cause. This is a mode of poetic composition which is peculiar to Maharashtra, and its vogue has not died out even now. Though most of the *povadas* which continue to inspire the masses sing of the valiant deeds of the heroes of Maratha history, like Shivaji's overthrow of Afzul Khan at Pratapgad and Tanaji's sacrifice at Simhagad, the ballad has been utilised to popularise generally events worthy of commemoration, in rough and ready but vigorous rhymes. The composers known as *Shahirs* are as popular as the religious writers noticed above. Though no longer confined to that class, the vogue started with the *Gondhalis* or followers of the cult of Amba Bhavani, the favourite deity of Shivaji. Today these songs are sung to the accompaniment of a single string instrument, wherever people gather in numbers, and continue to thrill the listeners, in spite of their somewhat

monotonous ring to the ears of strangers. It is impossible to convey in words the electric atmosphere the singing of the *Povadas* creates. They have now been imparted to gramaphone records, and broadcast on the radio, but they are most effective only when they have the proper human setting of the *Gondhalis* or *Shahirs* in the midst of a sensitive and responsive crowd. Here we must be contented with the last lines of Acworth's brilliant rendering of 'The Ballad of Tanaji Maloosre.'

> And ye, Marathas brave ! give ear,
> Tanaji's exploits crowd to hear.
> Where from your whole dominion wide
> Shall such another be supplied ?
> O'er seven and twenty castles high
> His sword did wave victoriously.
> The iron years are backward roll'd,
> His fame restores the age of gold;
> Whene'er this song ye sing and hear,
> Sins are forgiv'n, and heaven is near.

The *Lavni*, or romantic love lyric, is a popular twin with the heroic *Povada*. One of its great exponents was Ram Joshi who wrote at the close of the eighteenth and commencement of the nineteenth century. If the *Povada* is masculine in its robust vigour, the *Lavni* is feminine* in its tone and tenor. Its advent marked the decadence of Maratha power and society.

Alberuni's animadversion on the lack of the historical sense of Indians is largely justified by the paucity of historical works properly so called in our country, coming down from ancient times. Materials from which history could be constructed is undoubtedly available in abundance; but very little of it shares the character of regular history. Even the *Rajatarangini*, which is about the only historical work that constitutes an exception to this observation, is a poetic account of the rulers of Kashmir, in which history is not a little vitiated by the art in which it is expressed. The bardic writers of Rajasthan are about the only other exception we know of. Historical works and chronicles came into vogue

* More precisely, *Sringara-rasa* is displayed in the *Lavni*, and *Vira-rasa* in the *Povada*.

in India more and more with the advent of the Muslims. Among the natives of the soil, the Marathas made the largest contributions in this field. We shall cite here only a few outstanding examples.

To start no earlier than with the epoch of Shivaji, Paramananda's *Shiva Bharata* is a work of unique interest and value. It is a contemporary poetical life of Shivaji, in Sanskrit, of great historical use in spite of its form. Another work, composed in Sanskrit, and bearing on an important theme in Maratha history, is Jayarama's *Parnalaparvata-grahanakhyanam*. But poetry can never be a convenient medium for the writing of history. Besides, the above compositions do not have for us the special importance that works in Marathi, the language of the Marathas, possess in our context. Apart from the vast materials contained in the official records of the Peshvas (in the form of letters, inventories, diaries, etc., which provide authentic sources of information for the historian) the Marathas wrote their annals in the form of *Bakhars*. Some of them are contemporary, like Sabhasad's, and others contemporary or near-contemporary, like Chitnis,' Chitragupta's, Peshva's *Bakhars* and so on. The *Jedhe Shakavali* or chronology of the Jedhe family is another type of record which is of considerable historical use. Lastly, we might mention the *Adnyapatra* and *Rajavyavahara-kosha*, two works of utmost value referred to earlier. The former, supposed to have been composed by Ramachandrapant Amatya for the instruction of Shivaji's successors, and the latter a dictionary of political terms (Sanskrit equivalents for Persian) compiled by Raghunatha Pundit (not to be confounded with his namesake from Tanjore belonging to the eighteenth century), by order of Shivaji. The *Adnyapatra* possesses unique merit as embodying the political code of the Marathas, comparable to the Kautiliya *Artha-sastra* of Mauryan times.

Some modern writers have discredited the value of most of the Maratha *Bakhars* as historical works. While it is necessary to make discriminating use of them, like all other source-materials, to disparage them as a class could only be the result of incorrigible prejudice. As a corrective to such preconceived bias, we would quote the just appreciation of

the *Bakhar* writers by Edward Scott Waring, the forerunner of Grant Duff. Contrasting the Maratha with the Persian chronicles, he writes: 'Not so the Mahratta histories. Their historians, some will deny them the name—write in a plain, simple and unaffected style, content to relate passing events in apposite terms, without seeking turgid imagery or inflated phraseology. Excepting in the letter addressed to the Peshva by the great Malharrao Holkar, no attempt is made to make the worse appear the better reason. Victory and defeat are briefiy related; if they pass over the latter too hastily, they do not dwell upon the former with unnecessary minuteness. They do not endeavour to bias or mislead the judgment, but are certainly deficient in chronology and in historical reflections.'

Even virtues wrongly emphasised sometimes lead to undesirable consequences. It will not therefore be paradoxical to state that the Marathas fell because of their most impressive national characteristic, viz., their spirit of independence. This is writ large on the pages of their history: social, political and intellectual. The spirit of independence and national revolt represented by Shivaji is recognised by all. Under the Peshvas that spirit continued so long as the leadership was patriotic. With Raghoba began the decline in this respect which led to the fatal surrender of Bajirao II. The last of the great stalwarts who stoutly stood out for Maratha independence was Nana Fadnavis. After him came the deluge. Even then the Maratha chiefs did not yield to the British without a fight, though it was certain that it was a losing struggle. In internal organisation, Shivaji had initially to borrow from existing models; but he strove progressively to introduce innovations that indicated his spirit of independence in a deeper sense. He did not want to be a mere imitator. In warfare, too, the Maratha system was not slavishly borrowed, but original. *The Marathas failed when they gave up this tradition and depended on foreigners for arms as well as leadership.*

In the social and intellectual spheres, the spirit of independence of the Marathas has not been so well appreciated as in the political. Nonetheless it was as real and not less important. Dnaneshvar and Eknath, as we have pointed out

before, were social heretics who shocked their orthodox contemporaries by their revolt against existing conventions. In an age of sacerdotalism they struck out boldly on the path of religious, social, as well as literary reform. The way in which the Maratha saints, hailing from all sections of the society, including among them Mahars, Kunbis, tailors, gardeners, maidservants, etc., stood up to the persecution at the hands of social reactionaries, demonstrated that the spirit of independence among the Marathas was not confined to the exceptional few. It is also to be remembered that this Democracy of the Devotees was rendered possible by the bold adoption of the spoken language of the masses as the medium of expression by the exponents of the new cult, right from the time of the Mahanubhavas and Dnaneshvar. In times such as ours, when the vernaculars have themselves attained to a high literary status, it is not easy to realise how contemptuously they were treated in the days of the domination of Sanskrit pundits. We may find a faint parallel to it in the prestige enjoyed by English in the realm of higher learning even now, and the battles the advocates of the mother-tongue had to wage for a place among the respectables. 'If Sanskrit is derived from the gods,' asked Eknath with some vehemence, 'was the mother-tongue born of thieves?' Such was the linguistic independence asserted by the earliest makers of Marathi literature. As Shridhar argued with telling effect: 'Though the pundits praise Sanskrit to the skies, they are obliged to expound it in the popular vernacular.'

In the heyday of Maratha *Svarajya* as well as *Samrajya*, this spirit of innovation, adventure, and independence, was a constructive and creative force. In the days of their decline, which indeed was hastened by excess, Maratha manliness overreached itself. It led to insubordination, indiscipline and recalcitrance of all types. Individualism and particularism grew by insidious stages until at last they led to national disintegration and social and political disruption. Even today, the defects of their virtues are not conspicuous by their absence among the descendants of the builders of Maharashtra's greatness in the past. History, indeed, has its warnings as well as inspirations.

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An exhaustive Bibliography is a *desideratum* for the writing of scientific history in modern times. It is obvious, therefore, that Maratha History cannot be properly studied except with the help of an adequate guide to the sources and literature on the subject. An attempt has been made in the Introduction to acquaint the reader with the general works hitherto available, particularly in English, to the students of Maratha History. It is the purpose of this note to briefly indicate the wealth of materials that must be consulted by those who would like to form their own independent judgment on the topics discussed in the body of this work. Attention is confined here to the period covered in the text—'Ala-u'-din's invasion of the Deccan to the death of Aurangzeb'—only. For obvious reasons no reference is made to unpublished materials. The more ambitious student will find additional aids in the references and bibliographies cited by writers like Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Dr. Surendranath Sen, Mr. S. M. Edwardes, Dr. Bal Krishna, Kincaid and others. Apart from the mere lists of authors and works given by them, it is helpful to go through the critical comments made by some of them.

To mention only a few specific instances we might refer the reader to Sir Jadunath Sarkar's *Shivaji and His Times*,pp. 407-18 (3rd ed.1929) and his lectures on'Sources of Maratha History'delivered in Bombay in 1941 (*Journal of the University of Bombay* Vol. X, part I, pp. 1-22). Dr. S. N. Sen's Introduction to his *Administrative System of the Marathas* (2nd ed,, 1925). *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji* and his *Shiva Chhatrapati* pp. 251-59 (1920); and Dr. Bal Krishna's *Shivaji the Great*, Vol. I part I, Introduction, pp. 17-34 (1932). The *Historical Miscellany*, Serial No. 31 (B.I.S.M., Poona, 1928) also contains an article on 'A Brief Survey of Portuguese Sources of Maratha History,' by Dr. S. N. Sen. Extracts from the unpublished Dutch records in the Hague Colonial Archives are also to be found in the *Shivaji Nibandhavali* I, Eng. sec. pp. 61-88. (Shiva Charitra Karyalaya, Poona, 1930).

For the sake of brevity, and to avoid needless repetition, I have thought it superfluous to include here materials referred to in the above works, as well as in my NOTES. A very valuable bibliography of published works in Marathi, up to 1943, is now available to the readers in Mr. S.G. Date's excellent compilation, *Marathi Granth Suchi* Vol. I, pp. 958-96 (Poona, 1944). A thorough-going bibliography in all languages must take more time to compile than I can command, and more paper than War controls permit. Out of the materials I have gathered I subjoin a few gleanings which might be of some use to the more painstaking readers.

P.S.—In the present volume an authorwise Bibliography with the titles only of works available up-to-date has been given to acquaint the reader with relevant literature covering the entire range of this study.

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APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX II

SHIVAJI'S PROCLAMATION OF 28 JANUARY 1677

स्वस्ति श्रीराज्याभिषेक शके ३ नल नाम संवत्सरे माघ शुध ५ क्षेत्रीय कुलावतंस श्री राजा शिवाजी छत्रपती स्वामी याणी समस्त ब्राह्मण वेदपाठी व गृहस्थान व क्षेत्रीय मंडळी तथा प्रभुगृहस्थान व वैश्यजाती व शूद्रादि लोकान तथा जमेदार व वतनदार व रयेत वगैरे सर्व जाती हिंदुमहाराष्टान तथा महालनि व देश व तालुके व प्रांतनिहाय वगैरे यांस आज्ञा केली एसिजे हिंदु जातींत आनादि परंपरागत धर्मशास्त्राप्रमाणें धर्म चालत आले असता अलीकडे कांहीं दिवसांत येवनी आमल जाहल्यामुळें कांहीं जातींतील लोकास बलात्कारे धरून भ्रष्ट केले व कितेक जागीची दैवते जबरीने छिन्नभिन्न केली. हिंदु जातींत हाहाकार जाहाला. गाय ब्राह्मणासह धर्म उच्छद होण्याचा समय प्राप्त जाहाला. त्याजवरून श्री ईश्वरी कृपेने आमचे हाते श्री सांबाजीने यवन वगैरे दुष्टास शासन करऊन पराभवाते नेले व राहिले ते शत्रू पादाक्रांत होतील. परंतु लिहिण्याचें कारण की या सरकारात राज्य-भिषेक समई क्षेत्रक्षेत्रादि क्षेत्रस्थ ब्राह्मण बहुत ग्रंथ अनादि सर्व जमा करून धर्मस्थापना जाहाली त्यास श्रीकासी क्षत्रस्थ ब्राह्मणांत कांहीं तट पडून हाली ग्रंथ पाहाता भटजीकडून तफावत जाहली आहे असे ठरले त्वाजवरून हल्ली पुन्हा शास्त्रीपंडित व मुदसदी व कारकून यास आज्ञा होऊन ज्ञाति विवेक व स्कंदपुराणांतरगत शाद्रीखंड अदी महा न ग्रंथी निरमय सर्वज्ञातिविसी जाहले आहेत ते वगैरे सर्व ग्रंथानुमते व जसे ज्याचे धर्म आनादि चालत आले त्याप्रमाणे निरवेध चालावे अगर ज्या ज्या ज्ञातीस वेदकर्माचा अधिकार असून येवनी जाहल्यामुळें आथवा ब्राह्मणांनी कांहीं द्वेषबुद्धीने शास्त्रानुरूप कर्मे न चालविता मलीन जाहलीं असतील ती त्या ज्ञातीचे मडळींनी पुरो पाहून ज्याची त्याची नीट वहिवाट आचरणे. ज्या ज्ञातींत जशी परंपरा चालत आली त्या प्रो चालवावी, जा कोणी द्वेषबुद्धीने द्रव्ये लोभास्तव ब्राह्मण शास्त्रविरहित नवीन तंटे करून खलेल करील येविसी त्या ज्ञातीवाले यानी सरकारात अर्ज करावा. म्हणजे शास्त्राचे समते व रूढिपरंपरा व ग्रंथ पाहून निरंतर निरमत्छरपणे धर्मस्थापना कोणाचा उजुर न धरीता परनिष्ठ जेव्हांचे तेव्हांच त्वरित बदाबस्त योईल. हली यवन उत्तर देंशीहून येत आहे. तरी सर्व ज्ञातीने एक दिल राहून कस्त मेहनत करून सेवा करून शत्रू पराभवातें न्यावा यात कल्याण तुमचे सरकारचे ईश्वर करील. जाणे जे.

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